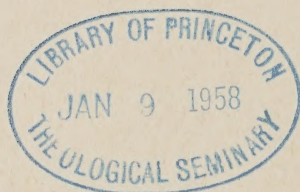




*The  
Story  
of Our*  
**CHURCH**

**J. E. MILLER**



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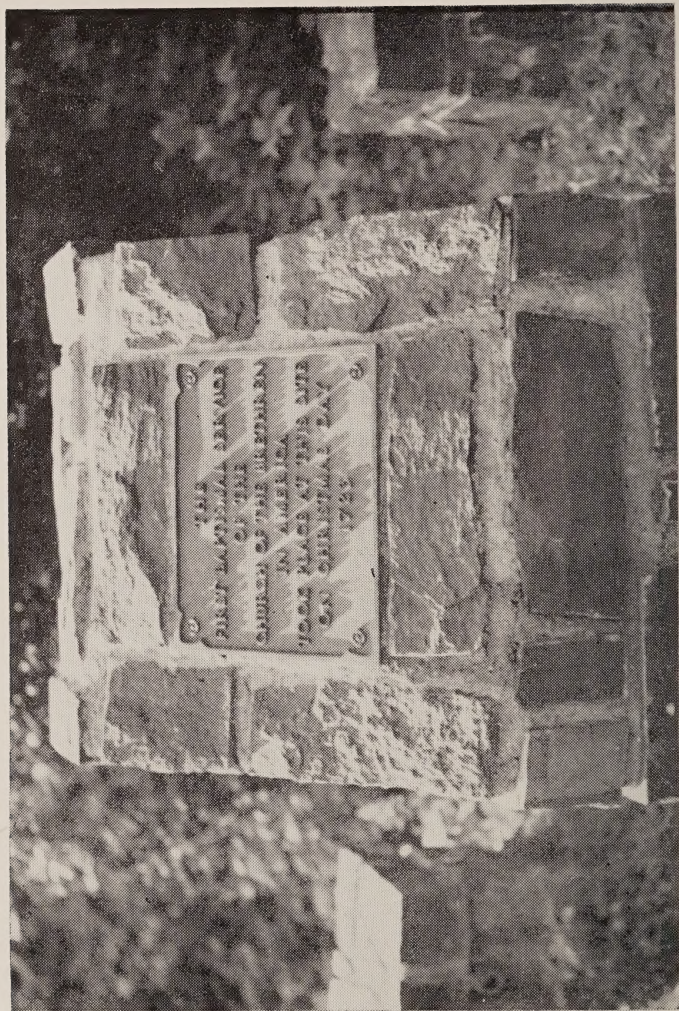




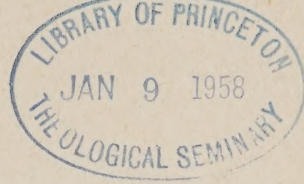








The Site of the First Brethren Baptisms in America



# *The Story of Our Church*

(Revised and Enlarged Edition)

✓  
**J. E. MILLER**

*Author of*

With Williams Our Secretary

Wilbur B. Stover, Pioneer Missionary

*Co-author of*

Minister's Manual (1940)

*Co-compiler and Co-editor of*

Minutes of the Annual Conferences, 1923-1944

BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE  
Elgin, Illinois



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Printed in the United States of America

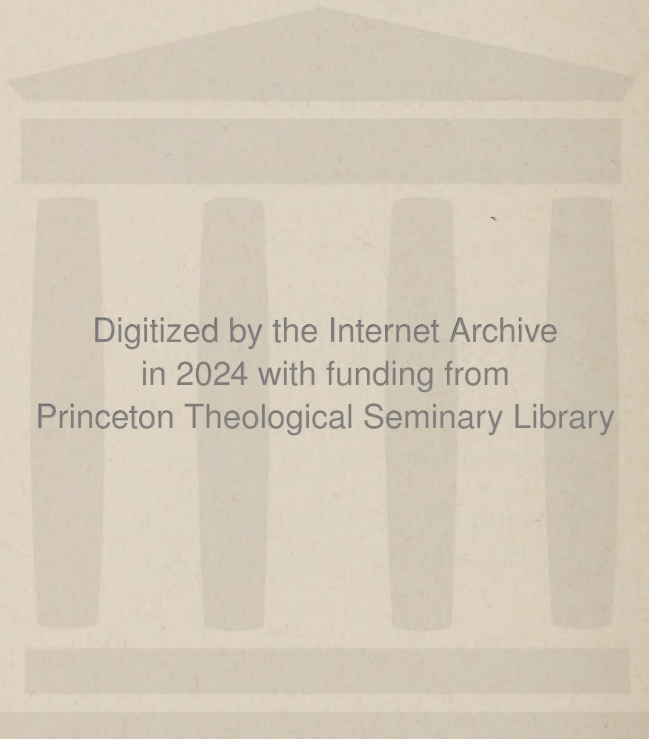
DEDICATED  
to  
the Young People  
of  
the Church of the Brethren

---

the Young People of Yesteryears  
Who Toiled and Builded Well

the Young People of Present Years  
Pillars of the Next Generation

the Young People of Coming Years  
the Hope of the Future Church



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## *Introduction to the Revised Edition*

It is true of a good book, as it is of many another of life's values, that age does not necessarily destroy its worth. The passing of time may only indicate its true worth the more clearly.

This has been the experience of *The Story of Our Church*. First published in 1941, it went through three printings and then after some years was permitted by its publishers to go out of print. In the years since it became unavailable there have been many requests for copies of it and many expressions of a need for either it or some other book covering the same general areas of our church's history in a similar brief and simple yet comprehensive manner. In 1956 the book publishing interests of the General Brotherhood Board of the Church of the Brethren initiated action to publish a revised and enlarged edition which would bring the story of our church up to 1956. The work of revising the book was delegated to members of the Brotherhood staff at Elgin, Illinois.

It has been the aim of the revisers to maintain the general pattern, spirit and outlook, literary style, and organizational form which characterized J. E. Miller's original work. Wording and punctuation have been altered at some places to make the book more readable and understandable according to present-day usages and

concepts. Statistics as to the membership of the total denomination and its constituent administrative units are taken from the 1956 *Yearbook: Church of the Brethren*. One new chapter has been added to outline the new organizational structure which has evolved since 1941. (As this revised edition is being prepared, studies are under way looking toward some further adjustments in the organizational structure, but these cannot be reflected in this revision.) Additions have been made to other chapters to give current facts on the church's schools, publications, internal program, and worldwide outreach. Some changes in factual statement have been made in the first four chapters to incorporate the findings of recent historical research regarding the early years of the church. The book, however, is substantially Brother Miller's work.

This revised and enlarged edition is offered to the church, and to those non-Brethren readers who wish to learn something about the Church of the Brethren, in the hope that it will be as well accepted, as widely used, and as valuable as its forerunner was.

## *Author's Preface to the First Edition*

When I had already passed that stage of life at which most men retire, the directors of the Brethren Publishing House asked me to look into the past and, if possible, to prepare some of the findings for print. So much for the reason for and the route by which *The Story of Our Church* came into its present form. Frequent requests had been coming to the House and to the General Boards for a brief denominational history suitable for use in summer camps, in study groups, and for general reading. Special stress was laid on a book that would not be technical and that would appeal to the younger generation.

The effort has been made to show what led to the organization of the Church of the Brethren at Schwarzenau in 1708, what drove the church to America, how it spread from the Atlantic to the Pacific, who some of its leaders were, and how it came to be what it is today. On many of these matters the records are all too incomplete. Brethren were living Christian lives, not writing history. Scant records leave much unsaid that would be truly enlightening.

In order to make the story fairly readable, footnotes, cumbersome explanations, and pages of dates have been avoided as far as possible. The appendix will furnish some of this material. The bibliography sug-



gests sources where more complete details may be found by teachers and group leaders. Wide-awake leaders will find there much that is not even hinted at in this volume.

This is not a college thesis written by a scholar for scholars, but a simple narrative written in the language of the common people "that he may run that readeth it." I am not blind to the shortcomings and failures of the Church of the Brethren. They have been many and have been widely advertised. My purpose has been to portray the good, and thus inspire the reader, especially the younger reader, to do his utmost to make ours a better church.

Thanks are due to G. N. Falkenstein, John S. Flory, Otho Winger, Gladdys Muir, Galen B. Royer, Sarah Zigler, J. M. Henry, and the State District of Eastern Pennsylvania for the use of copyrighted material. Nor would I be unmindful of my associates who read manuscript, made corrections, and offered helpful suggestions. I must mention personally Ora W. Garber and Elizabeth Weigle, whose eagle eyes caught many errors and whose good judgment improved the English.

If reading *The Story of Our Church* will help the reader to understand better, appreciate more fully and serve more cheerfully the Church of the Brethren and the community in which he lives, there may be some justification for the simple story as here told.

—J. E. Miller

Elgin, Illinois

March 1941

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## *Beginnings in Europe*

### TWO LEADERS

Come with me to the historic Rhine region with its castles, its terraced, vine-clad hills, and its liberty-loving people as they are busy with their several occupations. It is a period of religious unrest, of spiritual awakening. Down the road come two men on horseback, engaged in earnest conversation. They have often traveled thus up and down the Rhine Valley. They are not in harmony with the state churches and are discussing religious matters. They have been associated with the Pietists, and are on one of their preaching tours, proclaiming the gospel as best they have been able to understand it from long study. They believe that Christianity is a Christlike way of life. They condemn loose living and insist that the conduct of Christians must be of a higher standard than that very commonly found in adherents to the state churches. Their preaching has brought them into conflict with the civil and religious authorities, at whose hands they have suffered persecution, imprisonment, and the spoiling of their goods. They do not murmur, for they have taken seriously the Master's statement: "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Bless-

ed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets before you" (Matthew 5:10-12). They travel and preach at their own expense, and gladly accept the reward their Lord promised them. They have lived and studied together, and are eager to share their Christian experience with others.

Who are these two men? Alexander Mack and Ernest Christopher Hochmann von Hochenau. For short we will call them Mack and Hochmann. Neither is in full accord with the established churches. They have mingled much with the Pietists and have much in common with them. Hochmann will probably remain a Pietist, but not Mack, whose soul craves something that Pietism cannot satisfy. As Mack studied his New Testament, the religion of Jesus appealed to him as a way of life shaped and directed by full obedience to all New Testament teaching. Always that was fundamental with him. He saw that not only was fellowship with the saints taught, but a church was portrayed in the New Testament. His soul was grieved that the established churches were so lacking in spirituality, and fell far short in teaching and practicing the ordinances. Nor was Mack alone in this. There were others like him. All such were branded as religious dissenters. The aftermath of the Thirty Years' War, which was largely a religious war, left much to be desired by those out of harmony with the established churches.

## CHURCH AND STATE

The Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War, did not bring goodwill to those involved or the privilege to worship God according to the Scriptures and the dictates of the individual conscience. One need not be surprised at this. War seldom does bring equal rights and justice to all. Then as now the victors dictated a peace agreeable to themselves. The terms of this treaty granted to the princes of the several German provinces the right to choose which one of the three recognized churches—Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed (Presbyterian)—should prevail in their respective provinces. Once a prince chose his church that church must become the choice of all within his province. No other was to be tolerated. His individual choice determined the state church for his province. There was no provision for nonconformists. Dissenters were without privilege or protection. Nay, more; they were subject to persecution.

The several rulers accepted the terms of the treaty—all except Count Henry in the province of Wittgenstein in Hesse-Cassel, who granted full religious freedom to all refugees who sought residence in his territory. It is said that his sisters were of the Pietist group, which fact may have had its influence on their brother. Henry's liberal policy brought to his province for protection many who were persecuted in other provinces. This increased his popularity and power. It also aroused the jealousy of other rulers, who decreed that Henry must not tolerate dissenters. Thus this favored prov-

ince was eventually closed against dissenters, and persecutions became the rule in the province of Wittgenstein.

### SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

It was during this period that the Church of the Brethren came into being at Schwarzenau in Wittgenstein. Many, having suffered persecution and having fled to Schwarzenau, readily found fellowship with Mack. Together they discussed their trials and their hopes. Together they met for prayer and Bible study. Thus they found wherein they agreed and wherein they differed. It was their conviction that those who, with open and unbiased mind, gave themselves earnestly, sincerely, and regularly to a prayerful study of the Bible, would be led by the Holy Spirit to understand its message, would find pardon, peace, and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and would obey His teachings. These were known rather for their practical religion than for their speculative theology. They believed the Bible. They believed that common folks could understand its teaching.

Somewhere I read that Chief Justice John Marshall of the Supreme Court of the United States wrote one hundred sixteen decisions, and of that number one hundred sixteen have stood the test of time. Why did his decisions stand? Because Chief Justice Marshall made it basic in his interpretations that those who framed the Constitution and made the laws knew what they wanted, meant what they said, and used words in their accepted meanings. Mack and his group held similar



views as they gave themselves to Bible study and interpretation. They believed that God was speaking to them through His Word and that they would most readily and most nearly understand His message if they would accept it at its face value. This enabled them to avoid wild speculation in their Bible study and prepared them to accept the truth when and as they found it. Thus it was that, abandoning all man-made creeds, they gave themselves to prayer, Bible study, and meditation, maintained an unshakable faith that God would reveal His will, and determined to go wherever God would lead them. They did not go far until they were ready to accept the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice. Yes, the Church of the Brethren had its origin in Bible study, and Bible study has marked it all along the way.

Having accepted the New Testament as their guide, they sought studiously to know all its teachings. They found faith fundamental. They knew they were sinners, they were sorry for their sins, and they desired to turn from them. They accepted the New Testament teaching that sinful men need a Savior, and that they must repent of their sins. Faith and repentance became fundamental in their Bible study.

They read that John preached repentance and baptized the repentant multitudes, that Jesus was baptized and commanded others to be baptized, that the apostles baptized, and that the church through all the ages had continued the practice. In the New Testament they found baptism in close connection with faith and

repentance. They read the story of Pentecost and studied Peter's great sermon. They heard those who were "pricked in their heart" cry out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" They read Peter's reply: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him" (Acts 2:37-39). They accepted the promise. They considered themselves among those "afar off" and those whom God had called. They would not claim the promise unless they accepted the command to be baptized. They found faith, repentance, and baptism closely associated in the New Testament. Not so in the established churches, where infants, who could neither believe nor repent, were the regular subjects of baptism. They could in no way reconcile the prevailing practice of infant baptism with positive New Testament teaching of faith and repentance as requisites for baptism.

This led them to a thorough study of baptism. They studied it from both the Biblical and the historical point of view. Their Biblical studies told them that baptism is for believers. Scholars told them that the word translated *baptize* in the New Testament meant dip, immerse. They found in history that the early mode of baptism was trine immersion. But they would make doubly sure. Mack sought light wherever he went. He read again the command of Jesus to baptize as recorded by Matthew in the Great Commission. He saw that it,

too, commanded trine immersion. Only a triple action would satisfy the command, “. . . baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). With such zeal and pains did these early Brethren search for the truth.

As they studied Matthew 18 they met Peter’s question about forgiveness. Jesus stressed the forgiving spirit to a degree that the apostles had never heard of. He also told how to deal with unrepentant transgressors. He spoke of discipline on the part of the church. “Tell it unto the church” could not be idle words. Some of the Pietists believed in the church. Others, because of the shortcomings of the church in certain matters, discarded all formal church organization. Mack belonged to the former; Hochmann to the latter. They had long been fast friends. Both were diligent, sincere seekers after the truth. On the matter of a formal church organization they did not agree. Neither could yield in what he considered to be vital, essential, and Biblical. Having come to the fork of the road they separated, each to go his own way. Mack and his group continued their studies. The sifting continued until finally eight souls—five men and three women—were ready to associate themselves in a visible, formal church organization.

#### FIRST BAPTISM

Here, however, they were faced with a new problem. None of them had been baptized in the manner which they had discovered was Biblical and historical—trine immersion. Nor had they in all their search found

one living person who had been thus baptized. What should they do? How could they bridge the gap? The seven urged their leader to baptize them, but Mack was unwilling to do this because he himself had never been baptized by trine immersion. They resorted to fasting and prayer, and at last agreed that the four men should cast lots to see which of them should baptize Mack, who in turn should baptize the rest. But let Alexander Mack, Jr., tell the story:

Being thus prepared, the eight went out together one morning, in solitude, to a stream called the Eder, and the brother, upon whom the lot had fallen, baptized first, that brother who desired to be baptized by the church of Christ, and when he was baptized, he baptized him by whom he had been baptized, and the remaining three brethren and three sisters. Thus the eight were all baptized at an early hour of the morning.

And after all had come up out of the water, and had changed their garments, they were also at the same time made to rejoice with inward joyfulness, and by grace they were deeply impressed with these significant words, "Be ye fruitful and multiply!" This occurred in the year above mentioned, 1708. But of the month of the year, or the day of the month or week, they have left no record.

This group was in search of truth, not publicity, hence they went alone in the silent hours of early morning. They did not record the exact time. They had pledged themselves never to reveal who baptized Mack. They were establishing a church, not by apostolic succession, but by spiritual regeneration.

Who were these eight souls that so quietly, trustingly, bravely bound themselves together, pledging eternal loyalty to their Lord and Master? Their names have



been variously spelled. The following names and spelling are taken from *The Writings of Alexander Mack* (1860 edition):

1. Alexander Mack
2. Anna Margaretha Mack
3. George Grebi
4. Lucas Vetter
5. Andrew Bony
6. Johanna Noethiger (Bony)
7. John Kipping
8. Johanna Kipping

We do well to learn their names and honor them for the bold step they took in blazing a new trail in church history. And we honor them best by keeping our ears tuned to the Infinite, as did they, so that God may speak to us as He spoke to them. And may we not stop with that, but move forward.

#### BEAUTIFUL SCHWARZENAU

Never having been in Schwarzenau where these events transpired, I cannot picture the place to you. But D. L. Miller, noted traveler and writer, knew the place well, and in 1898 wrote this beautiful description.

The German village of Schwarzenau is one of those quaint old-fashioned towns that are quite out of place in the present. It belongs to the past, and has not yet awakened to the impulse of the age, which has taken hold upon many parts of Germany. Its peace and quiet have never been disturbed by the sound of locomotive or cars. For more than three centuries it has nestled in the beautiful valley through which, like a thread of silver in a ribbon of green, flows the historic Eder.

As we write, we are seated on the approach to the foot-bridge, used by the villagers to cross over the stream. On either side of the river stand the quaint-looking old houses, with high gables and steep roofs, covered with straw or red tile, which form the ancient village of Schwarzenau. The village children, in peculiar dress, stand at a respectful distance, watching, with open-eyed wonder, the strangers who have invaded their quaint little town. Even the elderly people stop and give us a look of surprised inquiry, and collect in groups to discuss the strange sight of a drosky with travelers in the streets. As they pass by they greet us cordially with "*Guten Tag*" (Good-day). Wife walks along the meandering stream, the water of which is as clear as crystal, and the gently-sloping banks are covered with grass to the very edge of the river. A well-kept lawn is not more evenly mowed than the grassy slopes of the river. It is a quiet October day, a day that recalls our own delightful Indian summer weather at home. The mountains on either side of the valley are covered with a thick growth of pine, birch, maple, and beach. The touch of autumn has tinged the foliage with a rich coloring of crimson, red, and gold. Up the stream, a hundred feet away, is the old, five-arch stone bridge, built centuries ago, and beyond this a beautiful stretch of green meadow land. Sitting here on the old foot-bridge, with the valley for a mile above and below Schwarzenau in full view, we have no picture in mind so beautiful as this.

And what are the associations connected with this quiet, old-fashioned German hamlet? Here at Schwarzenau, nearly two hundred years ago, the dying embers of primitive Christianity were rekindled, and the Tunker Church was organized. Here, on the banks of this beautiful stream, doubtless not far from where we write, the Tunkers assembled in the year 1708, and following the example of Christ, they "went down into the water and were baptized into the name of the Father, and into the name of the Son, and into the name of the Holy Ghost," and from here went forth that little band of peaceful believers, exiled from their

"Vaterland," to find a home in the Quaker Colony of Pennsylvania.

We have been brought into close contact with the homes of our brethren in Germany. We have seen where they lived and labored, and we are much impressed with the thought of the great sacrifices they made when they left these beautiful and fertile valleys for the wilds of the New World. We are made to admire, more and more, their courage and spirit of self-sacrifice which led them to abandon home and the associations of a lifetime for the sake of primitive Christianity. How they must have suffered, and what hardships they must have endured, all for the sake of religious liberty! How often, from their lonely homes on Indian Creek, the Wissahickon, at White Oak, at Ephrata, and at Germantown, surrounded by the red man of the forest, must they have looked back with longing, yearning hearts to this beautiful valley of the Eder, once their quiet, peaceful, happy home, from which they were exiled, never to return again!

How often must they have battled with the homesick feeling that will come to all who love home and leave it! How often in their dreams their feet pressed again the grassy slopes of the Eder! They drank again of its crystal water, and breathed again the pure mountain air, and were happy again in their old homes, only to wake to find it all a dream! These brave men and women endured much so that they might serve the Lord in his own appointed way. Long ago they were gathered to that home where the weary are at rest, and from which they will never be exiled. The cause they loved so well, and for which they sacrificed so much, still lives. And shall it not continue to live? Shall not we, who today stand in the places of those who have gone before, hold up the cause of primitive Christianity?

### JOY AND PERSECUTION

After this first baptism the members experienced great joy and were active in bearing testimony to their

new experience. It seems they all tried to win others. Nor were their efforts fruitless. Many were added to the fold. Other communities were attracted and they too were won.

But not long was the church allowed to be in peace. Persecution followed and many of the Brethren were driven elsewhere for safety. Marienborn had a large congregation by 1715. Creyfeld also became the center of a large congregation. Epstein had another congregation. Wherever the Brethren settled, their persecutors rose up against them. Members were scattered and settled in Switzerland and other parts of Germany. State and church combined to stamp out this infant organization. Arrests, courts, fines, prisons, and tortures were common. What crime had these people committed? Only this: They set God above the state and the state church, and to Him they pledged first allegiance. Like the apostles of old they said: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard" (Acts 4:19, 20).

### TROUBLE WITHIN

Serious trouble came to the church at Creyfeld in 1717. A young brother of the name of Häcker was baptized. He fell in love with the daughter of a Mennonite businessman. When the day of their wedding arrived the bride's father performed the ceremony. There was opposition on the part of some, because the minister had married a girl not a member of the church.



At that time John Naas was the elder at Creyfeld, being assisted by Christian Liebe. Liebe led the opposition against Häcker. The matter was brought before the congregation. John Naas and Peter Becker befriended Häcker, but such were the influence and persistence of Liebe that, with the help of four unmarried men, Häcker was excommunicated. His friends would have been satisfied by merely excluding him from the communion.

The results were disastrous. Naas says that more than one hundred persons were ready for church membership, but turned away at such intolerance. This did not satisfy Liebe. Others were expelled. Häcker, being of very tender conscience, took the matter to heart and died as a result. Liebe, strong and zealous as he had been, abandoned religious work and became a wine merchant. This first serious trouble within the church wrought more harm than the severest persecution from without.

In 1720 the church at Schwarzenau fled to West Friesland in Holland because of persecution. That very year the governor of the Schwarzenau region testified to the good character of these people:

For a while pious people have been living here, of whom we never heard anything evil. They kept themselves very quiet and retired and no man ever made any complaint of them. Lately forty families of them, about 200 persons, have moved out of the country.

This accords well with what is said in the introduction to *Rights and Ordinances* by Mack:

But as they found favor with God and men on the one hand,

so (on the other hand) there were also enemies of the truth, and there arose here and there persecutions for the word's sake. There were those who suffered joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and others encountered bonds and imprisonment, some for a few weeks only, but others had to spend several years in prisons. Christian Liebe was for some years fastened to a galley, and had to work the galling oar among malefactors; yet by God's special providence they were all delivered again with a good conscience.

### IMPRISONED

Because Creyfeld offered protection, many from other provinces found shelter there. Here they met the Brethren and heard their doctrine. Six members of the Reformed Church, becoming dissatisfied with their infant baptism, were baptized by the Brethren. At once both the established church and the civil authorities rose up against these six and brought them into court. The judge sentenced them to imprisonment at Jülich, where for four years their lot was to do all kinds of menial work. In 1719 the General Synod sent a "remonstration" to the king of Prussia charging that the "Dompelaers" had been most injurious to the established church, but rejoiced that these had now set sail for Pennsylvania. By "Dompelaers" they meant the Brethren at Creyfeld, and those who had "set sail for Pennsylvania" were the group that accompanied Peter Becker, who led the first Brethren migration to America in 1719.

## *Leaving Europe*

Being a church of protest and in the minority, the Brethren found themselves in disfavor wherever they settled. Intolerance and persecution trailed their every path. As a result some grew cold, some lost faith, and some returned to the established churches, but the faithful held on. Longing eyes turned elsewhere for relief. The New World was calling. They dreamed of shelter in Pennsylvania, where William Penn was granting full religious liberty to all. At least these three factors helped to shape the course of events for the first group of Brethren to leave Europe:

1. Persecution from without the church.
2. Dissension within the church.
3. The lure of the New World.

### ALL SAILS SET

But where would they find a leader? Modern travel bureaus and emigration agents were then unknown. There was at Crefeld a man, a preacher, known for genuine love and ready sympathy. As a preacher he was not eloquent, but he was gifted in song and fervent in prayer, both of which are helpful in leadership. Besides, he was a wise counselor. He was the kind of man in

whom those in distress confide and whom they follow. Looking into the future, the members were ready to follow wherever he would lead. That man was Peter Becker. He organized those who were ready to venture across the unfriendly Atlantic and brave the hardships of life in the New World.

But where should they settle, if they adopted this policy? For those living at Creyfeld there could be only one answer—not far from Philadelphia. Had not those who made the first permanent German settlement in America gone out from this same Greyfeld? That settlement was known as Germantown. Those in Creyfeld and those in Germantown exchanged greetings, though communication was not as easy then as now. Becker and his friends could not be ignorant of conditions in this Germantown settlement, which dated from October 6, 1683.

### A STORMY VOYAGE

Of the voyage and the group of pioneers led by Becker we know all too little. It is generally understood that the company consisted of about twenty families, one hundred twenty souls. We know neither their names nor the ship in which they sailed. The time was 1719. Sailings then were tedious, uncertain, and fraught with many hardships. This particular one was very stormy.

There were also storms within the group, bitter bickerings and echoes of the old Häcker trouble to disturb their peace. Their differences should not disturb us too much. The communities from which they came



had different standards. Their early training was different, and early training sticks. Because they were fervently religious they endured cruel persecution. As a result of these experiences they could not all hold the same views on all subjects, however firmly they were united on certain fundamentals. Holding strong convictions, they were bound to differ at times and to yield reluctantly. It is ever thus with those who can say, "I believe." A flabby faith shifts easily; a firm faith holds a straight course.

#### BEGINNING IN AMERICA

Whatever may have been the bitterness of their disputes during the voyage, there was great rejoicing when, on an unrecorded day, that ship whose name we do not know anchored at Philadelphia. All that remained for them to do was to make their way to Germantown, where they would be greeted by those who, thirty-six years before, had come from Creyfeld and had established the first permanent German settlement in America. At last the Brethren had found a shelter where they could worship without suffering persecution.

But they were not without new hardships. The New World presented new problems. Fortunately Penn through his Christian dealings had won the friendship of the Indians. Thus the Brethren, who were even then a peace people, were spared some of the dangers other colonists had to face where the Indians, because of mistreatment, were hostile and made frequent attacks. There was no going to worship with the Bible in one

hand and the musket in the other. To build new homes, to adapt themselves to the new environment, to learn what to do and what not to do—these and other tasks were theirs to meet and solve. They made the best of the situation.

Though we have no record of the first two years of their settlement, we may rest assured that they did not neglect religion in their daily living, because to them religion was a way of life. Having left Creyfeld for the right to worship God freely, they would not fail to erect the family altar and meet for worship in their private homes. This would hold them together, but to heal old sores would require time. They were passing through a sifting period; also a welding period. We will follow them as they build for the future.

#### FIRST MISSION TOUR

While Germantown became the center for those who came with Becker, not all settled at Germantown. Some went to other localities. These scattered settlements were not so far removed that the people lost interest in each other. Then as now, pioneers, those on the frontier, were less clannish than those of older communities. It was because of this that in 1722 Becker and two companions set out from Germantown to visit those who had settled elsewhere. They went to encourage their brethren and to secure their approval for an organization into a group for fellowship and for aggressive Christian work. The *Chronicon Ephratense* (page 22)

records the following concerning this first missionary tour to reach the outlying groups:

They traveled through the regions of Skippack, Falckner's Swamp, Oley, etc., and wherever they came they communicated to their Brethren how they were minded, with their approval, to begin to organize a meeting; also that they were willing to put aside all offences and unpleasant feelings in order that the work might be blessed in its progress. When they came home they began to hold meetings alternately at Peter Becker's and Gomorri's, until the advance of winter prevented them.

We can hardly realize what such a tour meant in a day of no roads, poor transportation facilities, and limited resources. It bespeaks, on the part of the Germantown group, a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of those more distant. Their own spiritual growth is shown in the statement that "they were willing to put aside all offences and unpleasant feelings in order that the work might be blessed in its progress." They were going the second mile and were putting Matthew 18 into their daily life. Their welcome visit helped to revive interest, created hope, wrought reconciliation, stimulated an atmosphere of brotherhood, paved the way for other visitation tours, and reacted on the Germantown group so that they established regular services at Germantown. The leaven in the meal was working and the Kingdom was growing within as is shown by the reaction without, all of which culminated a year later in a second tour.

### SECOND MISSION TOUR

In August of 1723 it was reported throughout the settlements that Christian Liebe of the Häcker case fame,

great preacher and for four years confined as a galley slave, had come to Philadelphia. Settlers of the Schuylkill region, who were interested in religion, came to the city to meet him and to hear him preach. The rumor proved false. But they were not wholly disappointed, for they joined in worship with the Brethren in the home of Peter Becker.

They returned home deeply interested in what they saw and heard of this new sect. In a short time they returned to Germantown for further information and fellowship. Arrangements were made for the Brethren to give them a return visit, which may be called the second missionary tour. As a result of this tour six persons were won and applied for church membership. Such was their reward for going thirty-five miles up the river to carry the message of salvation to others. Here was one of the steps leading to the organization of the group into the first Church of the Brethren in America. *German Sectarians of Pennsylvania*, by Julius F. Sachse, gives the following vivid picture of three important events in our church history. These three events are the first baptism, the organization of the first church, and the first love feast. The time was Christmas Day of 1723.

### A MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS

... upon the day in question the solemn scenes which took place on the Eder, in Germany, fifteen years before were to be repeated here in the western world and the foundation laid for a new Christian denomination. The seed sown in Germany was to be transplanted into our virgin land, where it was destined to



take root and flourish far beyond any expectation of the devout band on either the Eder or the Wissahickon.

It was a typical winter's day, the air crisp and cold, the sky clear, the ground hard and frozen, with a thin covering of snow. Many were the sad memories of the Fatherland that came into the minds of these pilgrims in a far-off land, as they plodded over the frozen ground; separated, as it were, from both kin and church, they thought of the joyous *Christmesse* at home.

The day was a well-chosen one for their object—the fervent desire to organize a church home for themselves, to found a new Christian sect in the New World. The series of devotional meetings held by Peter Becker and his helpers was about to become the grain of seed which was to bring forth a mighty tree with wide-spreading root and branches. Their aim was to form a *Gemeinde* or commune of their own—to give them the benefit of religious instruction, and at the same time emancipate them from what Falkner calls “the melancholy, saturnine Quaker spirit” which prevailed in the province.

It was well-nigh noon when the party assembled and devotional exercises were commenced. After these were over it was found that there were present seventeen persons who had been baptized in Europe, viz.: Peter Becker, Johann Heinrich Traut, Jeremias Traut, Balser Traut, Heinrich Holzappel, Johannes Gumre, Stephan Koch, Jacob Koch, Johannes Hildebrand, Daniel Ritter, George Balser Gansz, Johannes Preisz, Johannes Kämpfer, Magdalena Traut, Anna Gumre, Maria Hildebrand, and Johanna Gansz. These persons proceeded formally to organize themselves into a congregation, and constituted Peter Becker their elder.

Six postulants now presented themselves and asked to be baptized as by Scripture ordained, and then received into fellowship, viz.: Martin Urner, his wife Catherina Urner; Heinrich Landes and his wife; Friedrich Lang and Jan (Johannes) Mayle. Thus they became the first Anabaptists among the High Germans in America. In the church records this band of con-

verts is always referred to as the "First Fruits." The immersion took place the same day.

After this account of the organization of the church, and of the noonday meal the author gives a description of the course by which these men and women found their way to the Wissahickon, where baptism took place. Then he continues:

When the party reached the banks of the Wissahickon the afternoon was already well advanced, so little time was lost. After a fervent invocation to the throne of grace and the reading of a passage from Luke fourteen, the newly constituted elder entered the water through the thin ice, leading by hand the first candidate. This was Martin Urner, a native of Alsace, who had been brought up in the Reformed faith, and who, together with his two brothers, for a short time had been members of the Hermits on the Ridge.

The scene was a solemn one. The small procession on their way to the creek was reinforced by some of the Hermits from the heights on the other side of the stream and some others attracted by curiosity, so that by the time the party arrived at the banks of the frozen stream the company was quite a goodly one—witnesses who were to assist by their presence at what was to be the founding of a new Christian denomination in America.

Clear above the sound of the rushing waters and the rustle of leafless branches rose the solemn German invocation and the singing of the baptismal hymn composed by Alexander Mack, "Ueberschlag die Kost, Spricht Jesu Christ, wann du den Grund wilt legen." ("Count the cost, says Jesus Christ, when the foundations thou wouldst lay.") Numerous as had been the mystic rites and occult incantations held on the rugged ravine and valley of this stream since the gentle Kelpius and his band settled there thirty years before, none were more fervent or brought so great and lasting results as this solemn rite upon the narrow strip of rock-bound land on the shore of the Wissahickon. There stood

the administrator deep in the cold water; before him knelt the rugged Alsatian; thrice was he immersed under the ice flood. As he arose the last time the *Segenspruch* was pronounced and Martin Urner once more entered the material world to become a factor in the religious development of his adopted country. His wife, Catharina Reist, was the next candidate, followed by the other four persons, the same scenes being repeated in each case.

Long before the solemn rite was ended the winter sun was well down over the Schuylkill hills and the sky covered with leaden clouds. The party now proceeded to the house of Johannes Gumre where dry clothing was provided. In the evening a love-feast was held, the rite of foot-washing was observed, at which the newly constituted elder officiated as a token of his humility. This was followed by the breaking of the bread and the administration of the Holy Communion, and was partaken of by the seventeen constituents and the six newly baptized converts, making twenty-three members in all.

Thus was perfected the organization of the first "Congregation of the Brethren in America."

The group that met on December 25, 1723, organized the church, the first Brethren church in America, chose Peter Becker as their elder, received into fellowship by baptism six men and women, their first colonial addition, and partook of the love feast with all that goes with it in the evening, the first of its kind in America, was an unusual group. At least seven of the thirteen men were ministers. Surely, they would always look on the occasion as one of their best red-letter days.

### THIRD MISSION TOUR

Alexander Mack was an active missionary before he established the Church of the Brethren. We have seen

him as he went from place to place proclaiming the teachings of the New Testament as he understood them. For him Matthew 28:19, 20 taught trine immersion—and missions. He so breathed that spirit into the church in Europe that the first converts were aggressively missionary. After those who first came to Germantown were settled in their new homes they too became missionaries. Yes, the first Church of the Brethren in America was a missionary church. The mission tours of 1722 and 1723 grew out of this mission spirit and paved the way for the third and greater tour with its rich fruitage in 1724. From its proportions we know that not a little preparation was made for it. The number comprising the party, the territory covered, the messages that were delivered, and the results which followed show a great awakening.

The fall of 1724 found the Brethren of Germantown all astir. Something new was in the air. Had you been there you probably would have seen something like this: Neighbors were in earnest conversation. Groups here and there were enthusiastically exchanging views. What was it all about? The church was about to send out a group of missionaries to hold meetings in the several places where Brethren influence was making itself felt.

The seed sown on the other two mission tours had germinated and some was bearing fruit that was about ready for the harvest. The time for action had come. Peter Becker was the leader and had the support of the others. Perhaps after the morning worship some Sunday

he counseled the congregation, asking them to decide who should go and when. The Brethren have never been formal in their services. They do the thing needed and when needed. They respect rules and precedents, but are not afraid to establish new rules and new precedents. At the first baptism they cast lots to see who should baptize Alexander Mack. The vote of the congregation, not of the officials, fixes their policy. The church is one great democracy. Voting is limited to neither age nor sex. Whatever the process used at this particular meeting, we know the final outcome from what happened on October 23.

What the congregation has decided is about to be carried out by her missionaries. The group is gathering—some to go, others to see them off. Of those going, seven are afoot, seven on horseback. They plan to be gone two weeks, visiting and holding meetings in German settlements. We know not their exact course, but we do have sufficient records to trace their route roughly. Skippack, the Skippack Valley, and the home of John Jacob Price are mentioned by three historians as their first stopping places. There being fourteen in their number, they may have separated into several groups so as to reach more people. Thus there may have been several “first” places. Or, interested parties may have come from different localities to some central place where a meeting was held, and the people of the places from which they came may have considered their localities as “first” places. We do know that their meetings were



crowned with "good success," though many particulars are wanting.

They set their faces toward the north. We next see them in the home of "Brother Albertus" at Falckner's Swamp. How we would like to sit in and hear them sing, pray, and preach in the German tongue, but we must be satisfied with the record which says that their meetings were held with "great success." Brotherhood, union, spirituality must have struck a high note, for they closed with a love feast in the evening. Next they stopped at Oley, where the work and rich experience of Falckner's Swamp were duplicated.

#### MARTIN URNER

And now they come to Coventry, which is destined to play an important part in Brethren history, where Martin Urner welcomes them into his Christian home. This is the Martin Urner whom Peter Becker baptized first at the first Brethren baptism in America on Christmas Day, 1723, when six were immersed in the Wisahickon and were received into church fellowship.

Martin Urner accepted Christ and united with the church not only for salvation and fellowship, but for service. Like the early Christians and like the first Brethren in Europe, he shared his new experience with neighbors and friends. He returned home after his baptism and opened his house for meetings which he conducted. Wherever he found opportunity to speak a word for his Master he labored for the conversion of sinners. Nor were his labors without results.

### COVENTRY, THE SECOND CHURCH

When the mission group met in the Urner home for preaching, they found two ready for baptism. The meetings were followed by the love feast, that service instituted by our Master in the upper room, a service that has had a great part in maintaining the spirit of equality and brotherhood in the Church of the Brethren. The local group was organized into a working congregation and became the second Church of the Brethren in America. Martin Urner was called to the ministry, and the second Brethren church in America began its ministry of service. Speaking of this congregation Abraham Cassel says:

I have no doubt but that the Coventry church had hundreds of additions between its organization in 1724 and its census of 1770. The records of 1770 give the membership as twenty-two families of which number forty were baptized. There were these nine charter members at the time of organization: Martin Urner and wife, Henry Landis and wife, Daniel Eicher and wife, Peter Heffly, Owen Longacre, and Andrew Sell.

### BEISSEL BAPTIZED

We pause now on November 12 with the missionaries and enjoy their great meeting in the home of Henry Höhn in the valley of the Pequea, where a certain man of the name of Bauman has stirred up trouble among the Mennonites with his so-called "newborn" teaching. It was at this meeting that Conrad Beissel finally got the consent of his mind to allow Becker to baptize him after others had been baptized. It was

doubtless because of Beissel's baptism that the *Chronicon Ephratense* (page 25) speaks thus:

At this meeting extraordinary revival-powers were manifested. The Baptists (Brethren) spoke with such power concerning baptism and the divine purpose concerning fallen man involved therein, that after the close of the meeting five persons applied for baptism. . . . Soon a sixth one followed.

This tells us something of the character of their preaching, and that even at this early day the Brethren held revival meetings. After the Brethren baptism they returned to Höhn's home and spent the hours "in edifying conversation unto the praise of God." At the same time preparations were made for the love feast which was held in the evening, the first love feast ever held at Conestoga, where the third Church of the Brethren was soon to make its appearance.

#### BECKER'S CAUTION

On the Sunday following, a meeting was held at the home of Sigmund Landert. At the close of the meeting he and his wife were baptized. At this baptism was displayed the caution with which Becker admitted people into the church. It has been the custom of the Brethren at baptism to ask whether anyone knows a gospel reason why those seeking admission into the church should not be baptized. There being no resident members at this place Becker called on those present to witness against the applicants in case they were known to be unworthy characters. His words, according to the *Chronicon Ephratense* (page 26), were:

"These two persons have applied to us for baptism; but as they are unknown to us in their walk and conversation, we make this announcement of the fact to all men here present, especially to their neighbors. If you can bear favorable witness concerning their lives, it is well, and we can baptize them with the greater assurance; but if you have any complaints to bring against them, we will not do it."

### CONESTOGA, THE THIRD CHURCH

Before leaving the Conestoga community the missionaries informed the twelve brethren and sisters there that it would not be feasible for them to care for their spiritual needs and that they should make proper arrangements to care for themselves. Beissel, being the outstanding leader among them, was chosen as their minister. Their mission ended, the missionary party returned to Germantown.

These three mission tours are fine examples of home missions. They portray the Germantown congregation as a live, active, missionary, aggressive, and united group. In organizing new congregations leaders were chosen from each local group, thus making them self-sufficient and not dependent on the mother church. Wisely did these early Brethren adopt this course.

# 3

## *Mack Comes to America*

We have seen the church founded in 1708, the Becker migration to America in 1719, the three congregations organized in America, and the Schwarzenau congregation still enjoying comparative peace. Though the other rulers had decreed that Count Henry must prohibit dissenters he never actually put the decree into force. In 1720 Mack and his congregation found a new haven in Surhuisterveen in West Friesland, where Mack continued to shepherd his flock, preaching wherever he found opportunity, and dedicating his means to the help of his brethren.

### TWO PHILANTHROPISTS

Mack was wealthy. He, however, considered his possessions not his own to use for himself but a trust from the Lord to be spent in the service of others. Thus his wealth was consumed in paying fines for the persecuted and imprisoned and in supporting the poor and needy. Once rich, like his Master he became poor in helping others. He instilled his own spirit of benevolence in the hearts of his followers. A beautiful example of this is found in the brief obituary his son wrote of one of the Brethren: "Died, in West Friesland, brother



Adrian Pfau, God's chosen faithful overseer of the poor, who annually distributed 100,000 Dutch Guilders of his own means, in Amsterdam."

You will appreciate Pfau's generosity as you realize that a guilder equaled an American dollar. Perhaps this "overseer of the poor" corresponded to the official we call "deacon," and Adrian Pfau may be considered an early deacon in the Church of the Brethren. The Brethren from the very beginning considered caring for the poor a part of Christian living. With them Christianity was a way of life. They knew the meaning of John's question, and its answer: "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?"

#### LOOKING ELSEWHERE

Being a keen observer, Mack saw all too well what the future had in store for his congregation. Naturally communications were kept up with those who had gone to the New World. Through this exchange of letters the contrast between the freedom enjoyed in America and the persecution endured in Europe became the more marked. For nine years the church remained in Surhuisterveen. Instead of improving, conditions grew worse. Mack's finances were no longer what they once had been. His great and compassionate heart would keep nothing for himself while his brethren suffered. Nowhere were dissenters wanted. But whither should they flee now? Penn's protection in the province of

Pennsylvania held out a new hope. A second time the church in Europe turned longing eyes to the far west. In due time plans were completed. The church was ready to follow Mack, ready to exchange Europe with its persecution for America with its freedom, as Becker and his congregation had done ten years before. Westward we will follow the expanding church and note its development.

### GOOD-BY, EUROPE

We go first to Rotterdam, where, on July 7, 1729, we meet Mack and his group, one hundred twenty-six souls, about thirty families. They are about to embark on the *Allen*. Their departure will chronicle the end of the organized church in Europe. As we view the group we miss Sister Mack and their little daughter, both of whom have been called to their heavenly home where suffering and persecution are unknown. The day of sailing has arrived, the last farewells have been said, the last look at the homeland has been taken, and they are off on a voyage of seventy-one days between Rotterdam and Philadelphia. Some of these days were calm, others stormy. Otherwise the voyage would have been much shorter.

Their voyage ended, the same port that had welcomed Becker and his group ten years before welcomed Mack and his congregation. But there was this difference: This new group was welcomed by those of like precious faith. Only those who have been strangers in a strange land where they knew no one understand what

that meant. It was a happy meeting for Mack and Becker. The church of Europe and the church of America again became one people in one place.

### MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

We, who cross the Atlantic in a week or less, in modern vessels with every convenience, cannot appreciate the conditions on a sailing vessel two hundred years ago. Neither can we, who live surrounded by congregations of our own people, know the joy that those experienced who had been separated for ten years. Only those who have pioneered can understand what it meant to these two groups when they were reunited and bowed in worship at the Throne of Grace.

The homes of the members were thrown open to the new arrivals until further arrangements could be made. The church rejoiced that Mack was again in their midst to lead and inspire. The newcomers rejoiced that they could worship in harmony with New Testament teaching and the leadings of conscience. Elder Peter Becker, who never sought leadership, graciously looked to Elder Mack to assume leadership in America as he had accepted it in Europe. They had worked harmoniously in Europe; they looked forward to complete understanding and co-operation in America.

Some time was required to find homes for the new arrivals. They found the settlements ready to assist in locating and building these homes. These temporal things were necessary, however spiritual the Brethren may have been. All about them was new except the old

faith they had discovered, accepted, and shared in the Old World. Fortunately all were accustomed to the simple life. The day of modern luxuries had not yet arrived. To have the bare necessities was sufficient. That was all the oldest settlers had. We are seldom troubled about the things we do not have until we see others enjoying them.

Mack was not slow in discovering the one note of discord that was being sounded wherever he went. However much he loved a united people, he had long before discovered that human beings are not all alike and that some are past finding out. His troubles in Europe warned him not to expect perfection in America. This prepared him to meet the situation all the better.

#### BEISSEL CAUSES TROUBLE

Penn could assure and secure peace and freedom from persecution to the newcomers so far as his government was concerned, but peace within the fraternity depended on the church itself. The church in America was not enjoying the peace that might have been hers, because she lacked the union necessary to create that peace.

This time the disturbing factor was Conrad Beissel, whose insatiable thirst for power had brought him through a checkered career. Born in 1691, two months after his dissolute father's death, reared by his destitute mother, who died when the lad was eight years of age, he grew up in abject poverty, and led a wicked life as he accompanied his baker master to dances where both

played the fiddle. Later he fell in with religious people. In his many wanderings he met the Brethren at Schwarzenau and discovered something of their faith and manner of life. Time passed. He came to Philadelphia and for a while lived a hermit life. Coming to Germantown, he renewed his acquaintance with Peter Becker, whom he had first met at Schwarzenau. Becker preached the gospel to save sinners and strengthen saints, but for a living he wove cloth. Beissel became Becker's weaver's apprentice for a year. During this time he came to know the Brethren, their faith, and their manner of life more fully. It was doubtless his association with Becker at this time that later led Beissel to unite with the church. Beissel was brilliant and ambitious and was adept in picking up new teaching.

Beissel attended the services at Conestoga when the Brethren made their third missionary tour in 1724. When others were being baptized he was deeply impressed that he too should be immersed. But again the old struggle concerning his own importance arose. Because of his high estimate of his own great merit, considering himself superior to all others, he felt he should not condescend to allow another to baptize him. A fierce battle raged within his own soul. Finally, pondering the baptism of Jesus by John, he reasoned that he would be pardoned if he should seek baptism at the hands of Becker. And so he entered the water for baptism. Whatever blessing he may have received from his baptism, his old nature remained and he was humbled not in the least. All this is shown by his later life.



Following Beissel's baptism the Conestoga congregation was organized on advice of the mission deputation. Beissel was called to the ministry and at once plunged into the work. For a time he did well, but his tendency to pick up new teachings without weighing them properly was a hindrance to his efficiency. Soon he began advocating the seventh instead of the first day of the week as Sunday. He taught that certain Mosaic laws concerning the eating of meats should be observed by Christians. He preached and practiced celibacy, holding that marriage was steeped in sin. He taught other strange doctrines. In advocating these and other non-Brethren doctrines he became very bitter because the church neither approved his course nor accepted his preaching. The rift, once begun, widened until a rupture was inevitable. In 1728 he withdrew from the church, taking with him others, among whom were some men of marked influence. His power to sway others was great. Such were the conditions when Mack arrived in Germantown in 1729.

#### MACK ATTEMPTS RECONCILIATION

Becker was ever a man of peace and not a fighter. He and others had tried to conciliate Beissel and to avoid an open rupture, but to no purpose. When Mack was informed of the situation he too tried to right matters and to heal the wounds that were sapping the life-blood of the church, only to fail as had others. Beissel's bitterness knew no bounds. He withdrew to Ephrata, gathered his followers around him, built up his cloister

system, and developed a strong center in religious music. He did not fail to proselyte among the Brethren.

Some historians have classed the Ephrata movement as a part of the Church of the Brethren. It never was such. Its teachings, its spirit, and its manner of life were entirely foreign to Brethren teachings and life. The Brethren have always been strong on building the Christian family. Beissel condemned marriage and tried to destroy the Christian family.

Discouraged but not despairing for the future in his failure to effect a reconciliation with Beissel, Mack devoted himself to strengthening the churches. The organized congregations grew and three new ones were established in 1733: Oley, Great Swamp, and Amwell, the latter being in New Jersey. Within three years after Mack's death, there were two other churches: White Oak, 1736; Conewago, 1738.

#### ARRIVAL OF NAAS

Nor was Mack unmindful of John Naas, his former associate. Mack wrote him concerning the need and opportunity in these new fields and earnestly entreated him to come to America. Naas came, still strong in body and spirit. He was a preacher and evangelist of no mean ability. He threw all his might into religious work. Through his efforts many were added to the church. He built up a strong congregation at Amwell. Such was his power in the pulpit that some called him the German Whitefield.

Naas was a man of fine athletic build. He was also

strong in intellect and conscientious in all his deeds. If he espoused a cause he gave himself to it unreservedly. Once he was entreated to become a member of the bodyguard of the king of Prussia. When in spite of entreaty and cruel torture he refused to do so, he was dragged into the presence of the king, who inquired why he would not be willing to become one of his personal bodyguard, a position many others coveted. Naas replied that he could not do so because he had already pledged his allegiance and service to another and greater King, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he neither could nor would desert. The king was so impressed with the words and personality of Naas that he commended him and presented him with a gold coin. You should remember John Naas as the first Brethren conscientious objector, who had a splendid opportunity to testify to his faith. As I stood in the stone-fenced burial ground not far from the Amwell church near the place where his remains must rest, I thought of other Brethren who may be called upon for a similar testimony. My prayer for them was that they too may meet the test as John Naas met it.

#### MACK DIES

Six years after Mack arrived in America he died at the age of fifty-six, still a young man. His was not a long, but it was a fruitful, life. Born in 1679, married in 1700, organizing the church in 1708, left a widower in 1720, he closed his earthly labors in 1735. His was the life and work of a young man. It is given to few to discover the

neglected teachings of the New Testament, so to appreciate the value of the New Testament as to adopt it as the standard of faith and practice instead of some man-made creed, and to found a new denomination. Alexander Mack did this while only twenty-nine years of age. In death as in life he stamped his faith and character upon his followers. He stressed true humility, reverence for God's Word, strict obedience to New Testament teachings, and a mind open to the reception of new truth as the Spirit might reveal this through the study of the Bible. Retaining these principles, the Church of the Brethren has refused to write a creed.

A beautiful story has come down from the days of Benjamin Franklin to this effect: Franklin once met one of the Brethren and became impressed with what he learned of Brethren teachings. He asked for a copy of their creed and was surprised to learn that they had none. He then asked why no creed had been adopted. The brother replied that through sad experience the Brethren had learned that it is not given to many to know all the truth; that the Brethren in their search for the truth in the New Testament had discovered where others had failed to see all the truth taught; that they resolved not to write a creed, so that when a new truth was discovered they might be free to adopt it, and not be bound to the old creed as are those churches which have adopted a creed and refuse to change it at any time. Franklin pronounced this a wise course to follow. The story sounds fine and would be applicable to the Church of the Brethren, but the incident took

place with a follower of Conrad Beissel. Mack was a man of the Book. May his church ever follow him fully in this particular.

### JUST LIKE MACK

Speaking of Mack and his work, George N. Falkenstein in his *History of the German Baptist Brethren Church* says:

... his consistent life and consecrated devotion wonderfully impressed the truth he professed. He was truly loved and deeply mourned by those who followed his leadership. His death at this time was a very serious loss, coming as it did so soon after the confusion of Beissel's secession; and it certainly would have proven fatal if his followers had builded on the personality of their leader. But he was so anxious about the truth that he had carefully eliminated his own personality. Perhaps the truth of this statement is best illustrated by the following incident. Some time before his death, he said to his family: "Now when I am gone, don't mark my grave, or they might sometime want to erect a monument over my grave." The family was grieved to think that his grave should be lost sight of, and so they protested against an unmarked grave. It is said he then yielded to the wishes of his loved ones and gave them privilege to place his initials on a small stone slab. This incident seems well established as a fact; it is at any rate entirely consistent with the man's life and character, and the unpretentious blue-stone, scarce two feet in height, has been a silent witness for more than a century and a half, to multitudes of his followers.

Mack was buried in the Upper Burying Ground of Germantown, where his grave was marked with this simple inscription: "Hier Ruhen die gebeine A. M. geboren 1679. gestorben 1735. Alt 56 Jahr" (Here Rest the remains A. M. born 1679. Died 1735. Age 56 Years).



Here his remains were undisturbed for one hundred fifty-nine years. While Elder Falkenstein was pastor at Germantown he interested descendants of Mack in the Mack grave. As a result the old stone and Mack's remains were transferred to the burial ground adjoining the house of worship of the Church of the Brethren in Germantown, and a new marker with a fuller inscription was erected. The old marker now stands at the foot of the grave. It is fitting that Mack should have this monument in the midst of the oldest congregation in America and under the shadow of the church's oldest meetinghouse.

# 4

## *Activities Before Eighteen Hundred*

The first hundred years of the Church of the Brethren were not free from discouragements and serious problems. There were gains and also losses. The Ephrata movement, led by a versatile and determined man, left its imprint. Some of the strongest followed him for a time, among whom may be mentioned Alexander Mack, Jr., the wife of Christopher Sower, Sr., and the daughter of John Naas. Beissel was set for the destruction of the church. His own words were: "I would have succeeded in destroying the Baptists [Brethren] had it not been for Peter Becker and John Naas." Those were dark days for the struggling church. But there was a brighter side and to it we now turn. The church was launching new activities and was growing.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Robert Raikes is usually credited with being the founder of our present system of Sunday schools, his first school dating from 1770. Others claim prior dates for Sunday schools in their own denominations. The Brethren pioneered in Sunday-school work when they had in operation their first Sunday school in Germantown in 1738. Had they continued in this school so well

begun they might have left a better record. Because they failed to develop this school, and later opposed Sunday schools, they cannot claim much credit for the later development of the Sunday school as the teaching part of the church.

The Robert Raikes school at first was a day school that met on Sunday, established primarily for poor children. The Brethren school met on Sunday afternoon; its membership was the young married people, and the Bible was the textbook. There were, however, cards printed by the Sower press, each with a Bible verse and a secular selection. These were unique for their day. Sets of these cards are still in existence. Some are on the table as these lines are being written. You may find some in your community, if you make proper inquiry. Here is a sample of what you may call the first Brethren Sunday-school literature:

373.  
**D**As habt zum Zeichen, ihr werdet finden das  
Kindlein in Windeln gewickelt, und in ei-  
ner Krippen liegen. Luc. 2 : 12.

**Das Kindlein Iesus spricht: Werde mit  
Flein und still.**

**Hier liegt das Kindlein in der Krippen,  
Es schweigt sein Geist und seine Lippen,  
Sein ganzes Wesen sagen will:  
Kind, wärst du auch so Flein und still.**

## THE POOR

Jesus reminded His disciples that they would have the poor always with them and they could always minister unto them. The early church was concerned for her poor and did not neglect them. We have seen Mack's wealth melt away as he ministered to his brethren in distress. His example was followed by others. Abraham H. Cassel, our great historian, speaks of this in these words:

When the church was by persecution driven from Schwarzenau and Crefeld, the most of them took refuge in West Friesland, a province in the north of Holland, where they were kindly received. Their doctrine also met with such favorable acceptance that in a short time a great many were added to their number, including many of rank and nobility. Among them was one Adrian Pfau, who became eminent on account of his office as overseer of the poor (Armen Pfleger). [Read again the story of Adrian Pfau on pages 40 and 41.]

The Germantown congregation, mindful of the New Testament teaching concerning the care of the poor, and not ignorant of the noble example of Mack, Pfau, and others, had its "poor box" in which the Brethren placed their offerings. The poor box had a prominent place in their life. There has come down to us the record of money received and expended for charity by the deacons for the period from May 1747 to 1806. Among the items for which this money was expended were food, fuel, wearing apparel, rent, a New Testament, travel expense, and medical service. When the deacons made "the visit" they took along money with which to assist those in need. They cared for both

the spiritual and the material needs of the membership. At the time of the love feast, opportunity was offered to contribute to the treasury to meet the expenses of the church. Thus did the Germantown congregation build a strong fellowship between those who had means and those in need.

### FIRST BRETHREN HOME

It was during this period that the beginning of Brethren homes for the poor and the aged took place. For some time the Germantown congregation had been meeting for worship in the old Pettikoffer home. In 1770 the services were moved into the new stone church, the first Brethren meetinghouse in America, which still stands and is a part of the enlarged plant in Germantown. The Pettikoffer house, being no longer needed for public worship, was not allowed to stand idle but became a shelter, a home for the congregation's poor. Here we find the first Brethren Home. Those were days of little organization and machinery, hence we do not read of trustees and board meetings, but the poor were cared for. There was little organization but much work.

### EDUCATION

Among the Brethren were those who were well educated, men who knew history, both sacred and profane. Especially did they know their New Testament and its teachings. To them the Bible was unlike other books; it was the Word of God, to be revered, studied, and lived by God's people. As a result they were inter-



ested in education. When, in 1759, Germantown Academy, the first academy in America, was coming into being, Christopher Sower, Jr., was one of its staunchest supporters. He proved his interest in education by subscribing liberally to the funds being raised and by pledging a certain sum as a memorial to his deceased father and another for himself. For twenty years he was one of the academy trustees, during two of which he was also chairman of the organization. This was in a day when many were not in favor of education.

#### THE SOWER PRESS

Through the work of the Sowers, father and son, the Brethren became pioneer American printers. From 1738, when the Sower press was first set up, to 1778, when it was sacked by the colonial troops, the German-speaking colonists looked to the Sowers for their books and papers. It may be that the first Sower press was the same one that printed the first Berleburg Bibles, though this is not fully established. The Sower press furnished a variety of publications to German readers. Among the early publications were an A. B. C. book, a speller, an almanac, hymnbooks, a newspaper, and a religious magazine. The almanac was outstanding throughout the history of the Sower press. Franklin tried his hand at a German almanac, but such was Sower's popularity that the Franklin almanac was short-lived.

Ranking above all other Sower publications were the Sower Bibles, of which there were three outstanding editions. The edition of 1743 was the first complete

Bible printed in a European language in America. The edition of 1763 was the first printed on American-made paper. The last edition, 1776, was famous because the type was made by Sower, and it was the first Bible printed from type all made in America.

### MORAL ISSUES

During this period the Brethren pioneered in moral issues. They were known for their simple and temperate living. In private and in public they spoke against the manufacture, sale, and use of strong drink. They did not believe in human slavery, held no slaves, and opposed the slave traffic as contrary to the Christian religion. As disciples of the Prince of Peace they preached and practiced peace. They were utterly opposed to force and war as a means of adjusting personal, sectional, national, and international problems. They even took seriously the injunctions of the New Testament against going to law, holding that the principles enunciated in Matthew 18 were superior to all other means in settling differences. They befriended the poor and the oppressed, and appealed to the governor of Pennsylvania to stop the oppression and injustice inflicted on new arrivals from the Old World, who often were bound out by shipowners as virtual slaves to others for whom they toiled unreasonable periods of time in order to pay for their passage across the Atlantic.

The Brethren took an active part in the live problems of their time, and today are found to have been on the right side of moral issues. On some of these prob-

lems their attitude was unique. Being ahead of their time and in the minority, they were at times unpopular. They discovered that even in a free democracy the majority may deny to the minority that freedom which the majority claims for itself.

Then as now the Brethren practiced in war what they advocated in peace. Such has not always been the practice of nations or of churches. Many are the times when expediency has unseated conviction and placed itself in the saddle. It was so during the Revolution. Their peace principles did not allow the Brethren to engage in war—not even in the Revolution. This brought them into disrepute with both the British and the Colonies. The American forces raided the Sower printing plant, bedded their horses with the printed sheets of the 1776 edition of the Bible, took Sower prisoner, shamefully mistreated him, and confiscated his property. All of this he endured for his Lord, who had suffered so much for him.

Their attitude toward all war was a chief factor in forcing the Brethren out of public activities and keeping them in the background for more than half a century. They took their stand with that of the early Christian church, which was that the life and teaching of Christ were incompatible with the theory and practice of war. Where war rages the truth must suffer and might makes right. Such is not the spirit of the Christ. Those who take this stand should not be disappointed, if, in a world at war which makes life cheap, they meet the disapproval and scorn of their own nation.

Notwithstanding this advanced and unpopular step regarding war, slavery, and drink, the Brethren grew numerically, though not as rapidly as they might have grown had they been more liberal and held more popular views. In counting members the Brethren count only baptized believers, which naturally keeps their numbers down. Before the Revolutionary War there were at least a thousand members. Because they were a church of protest against certain popular teachings and practices, their field was somewhat limited. Protesters must be satisfied to be in the minority. Often when they cease protesting and become the majority they cease to grow.

#### USE OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

Another factor hindering the more rapid spread of the church was the language, most of the members being German and the Germans being a minority language group in America. Their language tended to make them sectional, provincial. This narrowed their field. By the close of the century the Brethren were found working in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. Wherever they went they took the church with them and made it central in the community.

# 5

## *Southward*

The Brethren, being human, followed the human instinct to migrate. This led pioneers into Maryland. Three outstanding Pennsylvania Brethren elders who left their imprint on the early Maryland congregations were Martin Urner, Jr., Daniel Leatherman, and Jacob Danner.

### MARYLAND

Urner was active in the old Coventry church for many years. He was also an evangelist of note. His travels took him into Maryland, where he purchased land though he never resided there. He organized the first congregation in Maryland, Pipe Creek, in 1758, where the Annual Meeting of 1778 was held. The earliest recorded minutes of Annual Meeting date from this meeting. Six other times the Annual Meeting met at Pipe Creek.

Leatherman organized the Little Conewago congregation in 1738. After George Adam Martin lined up with the Ephrata movement, Leatherman succeeded him in the oversight of the Conewago congregation. Coming to Maryland in 1756 he settled near the old post office of Garfield, where he organized the Middletown congregation in 1760. The leadership of Leather-



man in Maryland is well put by Morgan Edwards, the church historian, as he found conditions in 1770. After stating that at that time there was one congregation in New Jersey, fifteen in Pennsylvania, seven in Maryland, and ten in the more southern states, he says:

Their church government was purely republican as I observed in my first volume: but in Maryland (and I suppose in other states) they have a superintendent whose name is Daniel Leatherman; to him is referred the decision of variances among the ministers and the people, and as the Dunkers call all their ordained ministers bishops, it follows that Leatherman holds the rank of archbishop.

Edwards had imperfect knowledge of conditions, but Leatherman was the active leader among the Maryland Brethren at that time. Associated with Leatherman was the grandfather of Daniel P. Saylor, who became a great church leader a century later. Few men wielded a greater influence over the church than did Daniel P. Saylor from 1860 until the time of his death in 1885.

Jacob Danner of York County, Pennsylvania, united with the church at an early age, was a minister before he was twenty-five, organized the Codorus congregation in 1758, and moved to Maryland in 1762. Such was his influence that he induced a number from Pennsylvania to come to Maryland and settle in his community. He was a strong preacher, a wise counselor, and a ready debater. In 1750 he held a debate with the Reverend Jacob Lischy of the Reformed Church. Being a poet by nature he later cast his arguments into poetic measure. He frequently served on Annual Meet-

ing committees. So deep were his convictions on slavery that at times he purchased slaves only to set them free. The sick and the poor found him a true friend in time of need.

Strong leadership in Maryland gave the Brethren a good start. Before the close of the Revolutionary War a group of Brethren was holding services in Baltimore. In this group were some very prominent families. From these meetings grew the Paca Street congregation, which long had its house of worship but finally disintegrated. Through evangelization and migration the Brethren pushed westward in the state and established new congregations. There are fifty-one congregations (including Washington, D. C., and Bethany, Delaware) and a membership of approximately eleven thousand six hundred. The largest congregation in the state and in America is Hagerstown with a membership of nearly thirteen hundred.

Blue Ridge College, formerly Maryland Collegiate Institute, for some years was a vital factor in the progress of the membership. Starting as an academy when the high schools of the state were not yet general, it grew into a senior college. Finally it was sold to other parties and ceased to function as a Brethren institution. Later the plant was bought by the Brethren Service Commission and is now used as headquarters of Church World Service, the heifer project, the student exchange program, and the Brethren material aid activities.

J. M. Henry is the author of a very comprehensive history of the congregations and activities of the Breth-

ren in Maryland in which are also a large number of biographies of the men and women who have helped to make Maryland what it is in Brethren history.

### VIRGINIA

Brethren from Pennsylvania and Maryland entering Virginia settled in two groups. The northern group found early homes in the counties around Harrisonburg; the southern group occupied territory in the regions around Roanoke. When the English settled in Virginia they were not favorable to religious dissenters; later, however, a wiser and more tolerant course was adopted. Before Lord Delaware left England in 1610 to become governor of Virginia, William Crashaw delivered a sermon in which the following words appear:

Remember thou art a General of Englishmen, nay a General of Christian men, therefore, looke to Religion. You go to commend it to the heathen: then practice it yourself; make the name of Christ honorable, not hateful to them. Suffer no Papist; let them not nestle there; nay, let the name of Pope, or Poperie, be never heard in Virginia. Take heed of Atheists, the Divel's champions; and if thou discover any, make them Examplaire. And (if I may be so bold as to advise) make Atheisme, and other blasphemie capitall, and let that be the first law in Virginia. Suffer no Brownists, nor factious Separatists; let them keep their conventicles elsewhere; let them go and convert some other heathen, and let us see if they can constitute such churches really, the ideas whereof they have fancied in their braines; and when they have given us examples we may then have some cause to follow them. Till then we will take our patterne from their betters.

Governor Delaware followed these instructions. In 1611 he required all to appear before a minister of the

Established Church and explain their religious views. Those who refused to comply were publicly whipped and, if they persisted in refusing, they were whipped until they succumbed. In 1662 a new law forbade Quakers and other dissenters sixteen years of age or over to assemble in groups of more than five. Heavy fines were the penalty for violating this decree. In spite of the law the number of dissenters increased. Something had to be done to meet the situation. By 1700 Governor Nelson adopted a more tolerant attitude and allowed five hundred Huguenots to settle in the colony, giving as his reason that they would strengthen the frontiers. He meant that they would prove a sort of buffer state between the main colony and the hostile Indians. Others were granted the same privilege. Thus a new use was found for dissenters. The Statute of Religious Freedom of 1785, written by Thomas Jefferson, the first of its kind, divorced church and state in Virginia. This freedom to worship without being persecuted opened the way for Brethren and other nonconformists to settle in Virginia. With the Brethren the right to worship has ever been fundamental and they appreciated the freedom guaranteed by this new act.

As we try to trace the growth of the church in Virginia we are met with a scarcity of definite records as to dates of church organizations. There is good reason for this. These early Brethren met for worship, labored together, and took some things for granted. They felt the need of written records even less than do we who fail to set down in writing much that a hundred

years from now would be wonderfully helpful to those who would write a story of church activities. But we have sufficient information to see something of the early settlers and their religious work.

Two outstanding pioneer preachers of Virginia were John H. Garber and Jacob Miller, who settled in separate communities. Garber was the leader of the northern group and Miller of the southern group. Nor were these the only leaders; there were others who made substantial contributions, but we begin with these because of their pioneer and efficient labors, the results of which endure to this day.

In 1768 John H. Garber sold his earthly possessions in York County, Pennsylvania, and with his family settled in Frederick County, Maryland, where he was active in the ministry for seven years. During this time he was ordained to the eldership and labored with Daniel Saylor in building up the Beaver Dam congregation. In 1775 he, with most of his family, migrated to the Shenandoah Valley, settling near Flat Rock. He was a strong leader and was influential in bringing other families to this new settlement. The first Brethren minister in this section, he traveled far and wide in his spiritual ministrations, being on friendly terms with the Indians. His subsistence came from farming and from cobbling shoes for his own family and for his neighbors.

By 1787 the families in the Flat Rock settlement numbered thirty-two. Flat Rock was the first congregation organized in Virginia. The meetinghouse was



built on a gently sloping rock swept clean of all dirt. The existence of the congregation to this day bears testimony to the solid spiritual foundation upon which it was established in that early day. The remains of John Garber rest in the family burial ground near by, a silent witness to the lasting work of a good man. The Bowmans, Wines, Glicks, and others were also prominent ministers in this region.

In 1788 a division of territory was made, including the many preaching points. The Brethren were more concerned about preaching Christ than they were about local organization and church lines. That is one reason why they left such scant records. Around the Flat Rock congregation there developed Brethren settlements which centered in Shenandoah, Rockingham, and Augusta counties. The division of 1788 was known as "the Lower Rockingham and Shenandoah Brethren, the Upper Rockingham Brethren, and the Augusta Brethren. From each of these centers the ministers went forth proclaiming the Word of Truth. . . . The churches north of Harrisonburg from the time of the first division in 1788 were considered under one regulation, with Benjamin Bowman as senior elder with Elders Martin Garber and John Glick assistants at first, with others succeeding in the office of bishop as time went on. This continued without change until 1827, when the northern part of Shenandoah County was put under a separate organization" (*History of the Virginia Brethren*, page 175). Garber and Glick had settled in that region in 1783.

Such was the growth of the church in Virginia that the Annual Meeting of 1794 was held in the Shenandoah Valley. Problems of a theological nature were dealt with at this meeting, such as heaven and hell, the person and character of God, the resurrection and the "ban." These questions were raised because of the apostasy of certain ministers in Carolina. At that time the Brethren lived in scattered communities, far apart. There was little opportunity for close association and an interchange of thought. There was no church paper to broadcast faith and practice and lead to unity of action. Not all the ministry was well trained and well indoctrinated. Further, there were ministers of other faiths who proclaimed strange doctrines, some of which Brethren ministers here and there imbibed. With these conditions in mind one can readily see why differences arose from time to time.

We turn now to southern Virginia, where we meet Jacob Miller, another pioneer Brethren minister, who left his imprint wherever he lived. In 1765 with his family he left Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and settled in Franklin County, Virginia. Wherever Miller lived he preached. Being a man of means and a preacher of no mean ability, he left his stamp upon his associates. In the course of his ministrations he met William Smith of Floyd County. This man Smith deserves a paragraph all to himself.

Smith was an Englishman who had come to America with the English troops though he had refused to join the army. In fact, he was a conscientious ob-

jector. In England he had witnessed a baptismal scene which he never forgot. The king had appointed a certain man to office. As you well know, church and state in England are closely knit together. According to law this man could not assume his new official duties until he was baptized. The man insisted on "apostolic baptism." To meet this condition the king ordered six yoke of oxen to be hitched to a baptismal font (baptismal fonts were often large and very heavy, being cut out of stone), to drag it to a place where it could be filled with water. In this font the man was baptized according to the command in Matthew 28:19 by being immersed in the water at the utterance of each name of the Trinity. You will recall that Mack restored this ancient form of Christian baptism at Schwarzenau. Smith heard Miller preach. Being naturally religious he readily found two points of contact with the Brethren: their opposition to war and this old form of baptism which he had witnessed in England. Smith united with the Brethren, who, recognizing his ability, called him to the ministry, in which he made good.

Smith and Miller became fast friends. They made a good team, Smith preaching in English and Miller mostly in German. In their preaching they covered much territory in what we may call the Roanoke region. Much of their traveling was on foot as with staff in hand they found their way through the pathless woods and mountains to preach at various places. It was their custom to preface the preaching services with a period of Bible study in which the congregation was

invited to take part, to ask and answer questions and to read portions of Scripture. Here we see germs of the Sunday school, the open forum, and the panel discussion. From the work of these two ministers the church spread throughout counties of southern Virginia, extending even into North Carolina, Ohio, and Indiana. Fittingly in the yard of the Brick church near Wirtz, Virginia, one may see a simple stone marker dedicated to the memory of these two consecrated preachers who unstintingly gave themselves to the Christian ministry.

It was about 1780 when Botetourt County received a number of Brethren families who made their homes in the neighborhood of what later became Daleville. The first ministers were David Rife, Henry Snider, and Jacob Peters. Among other prominent names in this section of the state are Nininger, Nead, Moomaw, Crumpacker, Bowman, Hilton, Naff, and Eller. The present large membership and strong influence of the Brethren in Virginia may in part be traced to the sturdy stock of pioneer families that for conscience' sake sought homes and freedom in the Old Dominion when it was as yet an infant community.

The growth of Brethren communities is seen in the fact that the Annual Meeting for 1797 was held at Blackwater in the southern part of the state. It was at this meeting that slavery was considered at some length with the ringing conclusion that Brethren could not hold slaves and that those who did have slaves must set them free. And should one who held slaves apply for membership he could not be received as a member un-

til he had first freed his slaves. All this in a state where slavery was looked upon with favor and to oppose it meant opposition to the prevailing standards.

In this, however, the Brethren were reasonable. For a man to free slaves at once might bankrupt him; so there was a corollary to this rule. If the man felt that he could not set his slaves free at once he might hold them till such time as the church considered was sufficient to earn their freedom, at which time they were to be set free. The church, and not the owner, reserved the right to fix the time, which doubtless would be shorter than some owners would deem proper. When setting them free, the former owner was to provide each one a good suit of clothing. Nor was that all; it was the responsibility of the owner to teach them reading and writing and "the fear of the Lord." This was a literal and reasonable application of the Golden Rule. Thus wisely did the Brethren counsel in that early day. From principle they were opposed to human slavery of every form from the beginning of the church.

Mention has been made of Daleville, where for some years Daleville Academy flourished. When the rising tide of high schools and other conditions made the support of this school, which had contributed much to the educational advancement of the Brethren, hard to bear, the school was merged with Bridgewater College. From very humble beginnings Bridgewater College has risen to an enviable position and has contributed much to the state and the Church of the Brethren.

Of the entire Brotherhood, Virginia was the first



to seize upon and develop the regional idea in which a number of districts unite in plan and purpose. As a result we have today the Southeastern Region, which includes in rough outline most of Maryland and all the territory embraced by the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. Virginia has been divided into five districts, four of which include congregations located in other states. The one hundred thirteen congregations located in Virginia have a total membership of nearly thirty-one thousand. *History of the Brethren in Virginia*, by D. H. Zigler, contains a splendid record of the activities of the Brethren from the early settlements down to 1908.

#### WEST VIRGINIA

Brethren from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia spread into what is now West Virginia. As early as 1785 the Arnolds came from Frederick County, Maryland, and settled within the bounds of West Virginia. Beaver Run, dating from the early years of the nineteenth century, is recorded as the first organized church. Sandy Creek was settled by the Brethren in 1825. Here Jacob Thomas was called to the ministry in 1826 and here for forty-five years he gave his best efforts to the Christian ministry. This congregation with its seven preaching places has a membership of about six hundred fifty. In the Eglon region the Fikes have been well known. There are fifty-six congregations and over nine thousand members in the state.

## NORTH CAROLINA

The early Brethren in North Carolina hailed from Virginia and Pennsylvania. As early as 1795 a group of Brethren from North Carolina went west and settled in Missouri. From here came John Hendricks, pioneer in Brethren history in Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois. A man of the name of Jacob Faw learned of the Brethren in Franklin County, Virginia, went to hear them preach, loved their doctrine, and united with the church by baptism. It is said that he was the first member in the state. Later a church was organized and he was called to the ministry. The church grew by baptism and by immigration. It also lost some by emigration. It is interesting to note that Chalmer E. Faw, a descendant of the original Faw family of North Carolina, went as a missionary to Africa in 1939 and is now a teacher in Bethany Biblical Seminary. Thus do our forefathers hand down their faith to coming generations. In 1956 North Carolina has twenty-six churches (with which are linked the two congregations in South Carolina) and about twenty-two hundred members.

## KENTUCKY

Brethren from Virginia and North Carolina settled in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, at an early day and had an organized church before 1800. Joseph Rogers is reputed to have been the first Brethren minister and the first white man to proclaim the gospel in Kentucky. George Wolfe came on the scene in Kentucky. It was he that crossed the Alleghenies in 1787, the first

Brethren elder to locate west of the mountains, and settled his family in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Filled with the pioneer spirit, he built a boat and, loading his family and possessions on it, came down the Ohio in 1800. He settled near the Muhlenberg congregation. Among the early ministers was Francis Stump, a descendant of Peter Becker, our first leader in Germantown and in America. For a time the prospects for the Brethren in Muhlenberg and Shelby counties were good, but dissensions arose among certain leaders and the good beginnings came to a sad end.

There are today five Church of the Brethren congregations in the eastern part of the state. These churches, with a total membership of just above three hundred, are a part of the District of Southern Ohio.

### ALABAMA

In 1895 a colonization-education movement was set on foot to locate Brethren in Alabama. James M. Neff and N. R. Baker, along with others, formed a company, purchasing three thousand acres of land and school buildings in Fruitdale and Citronelle. The Fruitdale congregation was organized in 1896. Today Alabama has three congregations and fewer than two hundred fifty members. The Alabama churches are a part of the District of Tennessee.

### TENNESSEE

Rockingham and Franklin counties, Virginia, furnished the first Brethren settlers for Tennessee. Some

of these came near the close of the eighteenth century. Samuel Garber from Rockingham County made three trips to Washington County, Tennessee, and organized Knob Creek, the oldest church in the state, near 1800. Isaac Hammer was the first resident minister. The main ministers for some time were Daniel Bowman, who spoke in English, and Michael Krouse, who spoke in German. Joseph Bowman and John Bowman were the first deacons. The Bowmans have always been prominent in this church and in the state. For the first communion five members met in a private home between Knob Creek and Boone's Creek, under the lead of — Burkett of North Carolina and Isaac Hammer. Cedar Grove was organized in 1824 and Limestone in 1847.

Among the well-known names in Tennessee are Garber, Bowman, Molsbee, and Garst. As early as 1844 the Annual Meeting was held in the Knob Creek congregation. In 1860, when the war clouds were lowering, the Limestone congregation entertained the Annual Meeting. Because of the national disturbance only sixty congregations represented. Pennsylvania was without representation, while Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa had but few representatives. Local dissensions, slavery, and the war militated against the growth of the church for some years in Tennessee, but after the Civil War a more prosperous period prevailed. The District of Tennessee now has a total membership of just under two thousand (not counting the membership in Alabama and Virginia) and twenty-nine con-

gregations. The congregations are distributed thus: twenty-three in Tennessee, three in Alabama, and three in Virginia.

### FLORIDA

The first attempt to plant the church in Florida resulted in three organizations: Keuka, 1884; Hawthorn, in the 1880's; Indian River, 1898. These organizations did not survive, partly because of the great freeze of 1895. The first Brethren family was that of J. H. Moore.

The second attempt takes us to 1912. More lasting results followed this effort. Note these churches organized: Zion (Tampa), 1912; Clay County, 1914; Arcadia, 1914; Seneca, 1915; Sebring, 1916. Among the pioneers in the second movement to establish the church in Florida may be mentioned J. H. Moore, J. V. Felthouse, A. D. Crist, I. H. Crist, S. W. Bail, J. C. Funderburgh, and L. L. Nininger. J. H. Morris and J. H. Moore have written the story of the congregations.

At present there are fourteen congregations and more than a thousand members in the district. The largest congregation is Sebring, which has become a sort of Brethren winter Mecca. The small but growing Spanish-speaking congregation at Castañer, Puerto Rico, is allied with the churches in Florida.



# 6

## *Westward in Pennsylvania*

Pennsylvania has always stood out in Brethren history. One turns to Pennsylvania in search of beginnings. Here were the first Brethren settlers, the first baptism, the first love feast, the first organized church, the first printing press, the first meetinghouse, the first Annual Meeting, the first schools.

The following from *History of the Church of the Brethren of Western Pennsylvania* gives a bird's-eye view of how the church moved westward and occupied strategic sections in garden spots of the state. The dates given in several instances vary slightly from those recorded by others.

These seem to be the congregations in Pennsylvania and New Jersey before the Revolution: Germantown (Beggarstown), eight miles from Philadelphia, December 25, 1723; Coventry, in Chester County, September 7, 1724; Conestoga, in Lancaster County, November 12, 1724; Oley, fifty-five miles northwest of Philadelphia, in Berks County, 1732; Great Swamp, Bucks County, 1733; Amwell, New Jersey, 1733; Cocalico, in Lancaster County, 1734; White Oak, in Lancaster County, 1736; Little Conewago, York County, 1738; Big Conewago, York County, 1741; Northkill, in Berks County, in 1748; Big Swatara, Lancaster County, in 1756; Little Swatara, in Berks and Lancaster counties, in 1757; Codorus, in York County, in 1758; Bermudian, in York County, in 1758; and probably Stony Creek (Brothers Valley), Somerset

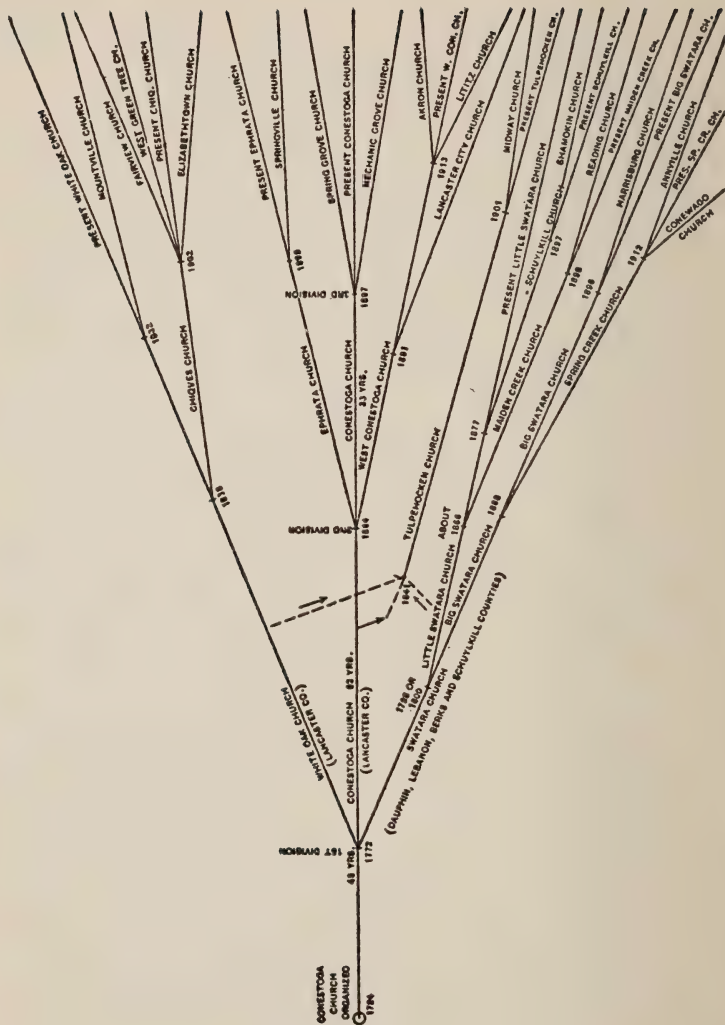
County, in 1762; also Antietam, in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and Washington County, Maryland, in 1752.

We also find settlements of Brethren in Morrison's Cove, Blair and Bedford counties, before the Revolution.

Back of movements one always finds men of influence, men who were leaders, men whose names come down and abide with later generations. It may not be amiss to record here a few Pennsylvania names that helped to make history for the Church of the Brethren, names familiar in Brethren homes before the close of the nineteenth century: Becker, Brumbaugh, Bucher, Cassel, Danner, Frantz, Geiger, Gibbel (le), Harley, Holsinger, Keyser, Leatherman, Mack, Miller, Mohler, Myer (s), Naas, Pfautz (Fouts), Price, Quinter, Royer, Sower, Umstad, Urner, Wenger, Ziegler, Zug. The list is merely suggestive. Many others of equal importance are not recorded here, but are recorded in heaven, where not a single deed of the least is unknown.

The Conestoga congregation, organized on November 12, 1724, is a fine example of one congregation growing and spawning until its branches embrace territory in five counties. In this particular church the counties are Lancaster, Dauphin, Lebanon, Berks, and Schuylkill. The diagram on page 78 is taken from *History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania*.

George Adam Martin, who had lived in the Coventry, Conestoga, and Little Conewago congregations, and had adopted some of Beissel's teachings, led a colony to Stony Creek (Brothers Valley) in 1762 and



organized the Stony Creek congregation that same year. This marked the far western point for the Brethren at that time. This congregation later became a regular Church of the Brethren.

Deacon John Keagy, coming from York County, found a few scattered members some twelve miles south of Berlin, one of whom was John Burger, who occupied land on which Meyersdale now stands. In the fall of this same year (1783) ministers from the east came and hunted up Keagy. Ministers at that time had a custom of searching out isolated Brethren and ministering to their needs. Keagy rounded up the Brethren in that section and a love feast was held in the home of John Burger. H. R. Holsinger says a church was organized at that time. Keagy was called to the ministry and later advanced to the eldership, locating near Dayton, Ohio, in 1806.

Once when some of the ministering brethren from eastern Pennsylvania visited their brethren in the western part of the state, George Price, father of Isaac Price, was in a group that preached in Bedford and Somerset counties. When they sought lodging at a certain hotel, the landlord informed them that he could well entertain them, but feared they would be disturbed by the music and dancing planned for the night. The brethren, however, said they could sleep through it, especially since the next hotel was seven miles distant. After arrangements were made for their stay, the leader of the dance, learning that some ministers were in the hotel, asked permission to meet them in their room. Permission was

cheerfully granted. The conversation did not progress far until the leader asked permission to bring others of his friends. These, too, were invited in. Ere long the men interested in the dance proposed postponing it and asked Price to preach to their group, which he did. Thus it came to pass that those who came to fiddle and dance heard a Dunker preach and pray.

We will take a glimpse at a few other early congregations which well illustrate how the church grew through home missionary efforts under a sacrificing free ministry. Only thus can we appreciate how the ministry accomplished so much at so small expense to the laity.

In the middle of the eighteenth century some Brethren came west and settled in Morrison's Cove in the section where the Clover Creek, Roaring Spring, and James Creek congregations are now found. From this settlement nine congregations developed, the earliest being Clover Creek (1790). James Creek followed in 1858 and Huntingdon in 1878, a long lapse. From James Creek came the Brumbaugh's. Both James Creek and Huntingdon have made large contributions to the publication, educational, and missionary growth of the Church of the Brethren.

Brethren early began settling in the Kishacoquillas Valley, in which was organized the Kishacoquillas congregation in 1781. The name has been changed to Dry Valley. From this came the Aughwick church in 1802. Out of this congregation grew six others. It was here that S. Z. Sharp opened Kishacoquillas Seminary in



1861 and conducted it as a normal school for four years, a pioneer educational effort in the Church of the Brethren.

It was in 1800 that the Franktown congregation was organized, the name being changed to Duncansville in 1866, and in 1904 to Carson Valley. It was from this source that the Altoona group developed.

The early Yellow Creek congregation, organized in 1800, may be called the mother of churches. In 1895 the name was changed to New Enterprise. The church now has a membership of nearly six hundred. The first congregation cut off from Yellow Creek was Snake Spring in 1820. This Yellow Creek congregation grew until now there are fifteen churches in the group.

The Pennsylvania congregations offer a splendid opportunity for those who would discover the genius of the Church of the Brethren, her early settlements and great leaders, the strength and weakness of the free and the supported ministry, and why some centers have continued strongly Brethren whereas others with apparently the same beginnings have made little impression on their communities and have never spread into new territory.

With its large Brethren population came also a wide difference in opinion on certain policies. When the church rupture came in the eighties, Ohio led in the Old Order element. On the other hand, Western Pennsylvania furnished the leadership of the Progressive movement. At the same time, Eastern Pennsylvania contained a large constituency that was very conserva-

tive, but was unwilling to follow the Old Order leadership. The state as a whole held to the main body of the church, displaying that sturdy German steadfastness that would not be swept off its feet. The Church of the Brethren owes much to Pennsylvania for the balance it retained when the church was severely shaken.

Among the stabilizing factors should be mentioned the educational interests. Juniata College, organized in 1876, was the first Brethren school to come and stay. Her influence has been far-reaching. Elizabethtown College, organized in 1900, has also made a rich contribution in bringing together the aggressive younger and conservative older groups. Without the work of these two institutions the story of the Brethren in Pennsylvania in recent years would be quite different.

The state is divided into five districts, including seven congregations in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. The two hundred two congregations located within Pennsylvania have a total membership of more than fifty-two thousand.

Pennsylvania has set a commendable example for others in digging out Brethren history. The following histories have been published: *The History of the Church of the Brethren of Eastern Pennsylvania*; *A History of the Church of the Brethren in the Middle District of Pennsylvania*; *History of the Church of the Brethren in Western Pennsylvania*; and *Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren in Western Pennsylvania*.

## *North of the Ohio*

Long before Horace Greeley popularized "Go west," the Brethren with their agricultural instinct sensed the productiveness of the fertile fields lying toward the setting sun. Nor were they slow in occupying lands lying between Pennsylvania and the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. That is one reason why the Brethren in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin have two hundred ninety-nine congregations and a total membership of approximately fifty-two thousand today.

### OHIO

The Brethren entered Ohio along the Ohio River east of Cincinnati. The first Brethren minister in the state is said to have been John Countryman, who settled in Adams County about 1793. He was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, about 1760 and about twenty years later married Ann Marie Barbara Ridenour. Together they came to Ohio, where he became known as a forceful speaker, using both the German and the English language. They settled on a tract of land about four miles north of the celebrated Serpent Mound. In 1805 he became the founder of the Brush Creek congregation.

The first church organized in Ohio was Stone

Lick. We are told that in 1795 David Stouder officiated at this organization. Who he was and where he came from are not recorded, but fifteen charter members were ready to associate in a formal organization under his leadership. It is possible that he was assisted by John Countryman and John Garver. Tradition has it that David Bowman was called to the ministry in 1800 or 1802. At that time the congregation must have been prospering for there is a list of fifty-four members.

We turn again to Jacob Miller, whom we left in Franklin County, Virginia. Having disposed of his holdings in Virginia, he came to Ohio and purchased parts of three sections of land near Dayton. This was in 1800. True to his former record, he began preaching and the same year baptized Mary Rohrer, a girl eighteen years of age. This led to the beginning of Brethren congregations in the Miami Valley, of which Lower Miami, organized in 1805, was the mother congregation. Assisting in the organization were probably Michael Etter and John Garver. Miller was placed in charge of the congregation. Among the family names in those early days were: Miller, Wolfe, Bowser, Metzger, Shively, Forney, Noffsinger, Keen, Cripe, Caylor, Weybright, Ullery, Flory, Vaniman, Arnold, Kuns, Coblentz, and Rohrer. Nearly all these names have remained prominent in Brethren history.

With leaders like Miller, Garver, and Bowman in the ministry we are not surprised at the growth of the membership, which was such that in 1811 this one congregation was divided into four separate organi-

zations: Lower Miami, Lower Stillwater, Bear Creek, and Wolf Creek. Here and elsewhere in Brethren history we have a strong testimony of the effective work done by the pioneer ministers who toiled with their hands and preached the gospel while they supported themselves and contributed liberally to the support of the churches.

Other early congregations in southern Ohio were Brush Creek (Bremen) and Twin, 1809; Donnels Creek before 1810; Beaver Creek, 1812; and Salem, 1817.

Other Brethren settled elsewhere. In 1804 John Gans cut his way through the timber from Columbiana County into Stark County. Not only did he know how to fell trees; he also knew how to build a congregation, for not more than a year later he organized the Nimishillen congregation, duplicating what Jacob Miller did in Lower Miami. Gans was a man of deep convictions. He was unalterably opposed to the liquor business in all its forms. Dying early in life, he stated in his will that no liquor should be served at his funeral or at the sale of his property. In his day, on such occasions and at other public gatherings, it was customary to serve liquor to all who would drink it. Thus, after his death, John Gans preached against drinking. In 1822 the Annual Meeting was held within the bounds of the Nimishillen congregation near Canton, the first time it had gone beyond the Allegheny Mountains.

Mill Creek, later known as Mahoning, was organized in 1815. Here George Hoke was called to the ministry, and Henry Kurtz was elder, he who revived



the printing press by publishing the *Gospel Visitor* at Poland and Columbiana, beginning with April 1851. Kurtz called James Quinter from Pennsylvania to Ohio in 1856 to become his assistant and English editor. Other early eastern Ohio congregations were Jonathan Creek, organized in 1817; Danville, in 1822; Logan, in 1827; and Seneca, in 1828.

In 1878 Ohio awoke to find Ashland College on its doorsteps, brought forth under the leadership of S. Z. Sharp. Soon financial troubles were encountered, and the church rupture in the early eighties hindered the college from doing much for the Church of the Brethren. Although the Old Order and the Progressive elements drew heavily on Ohio at the time of the division, the state still ranks third in membership, being surpassed only by Pennsylvania and Virginia. The one hundred eleven congregations with a total membership of twenty-two thousand proclaim the steadfastness of the constituency.

### *A Colored Church*

The story of the colored church at Frankfort, Ohio, should be recorded. In 1824 Andrew McClure of Virginia bought Samuel Wier, a slave boy only twelve years of age, for two hundred eighty dollars. In 1843 McClure and his wife applied for membership in the church, only to learn that the Brethren did not receive into their fellowship those who held slaves. They were in earnest; so they set Samuel free after his years of service, though they could have sold him for fifteen

hundred dollars. Then they were baptized. Samuel was so won by the Christian conduct of his former owners that he too united with the church, being baptized by Peter Nead. Within a year, accompanied by B. F. Moomaw, he made his way to Ohio, where he found a church and a home among the Brethren. In 1849 he was called to the ministry, laboring for sixteen years before he won his first converts among his own race. The Frankfort colored congregation was organized and Wier continued to labor for it in the ministry. After his death in 1881 the work declined until it disappeared altogether. Such is the short and simple story of the first colored Brethren congregation.

#### INDIANA

Between 1804 and 1808 the following Brethren from Virginia and Pennsylvania settled in Indiana and became members of the first Church of the Brethren organized in the state: Christopher and John Witter, John Moyer, Daniel and Abraham Miller, James Huston, and their wives, and Ann Lybrook and Phoebe Miller. Jacob Miller of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ohio, learning of Brethren in Indiana, went and preached for them, thus becoming Indiana's first Brethren preacher. In 1809 he and John Hart organized these Brethren into the Four Mile church, which is still thriving. John Moyer and Daniel Miller were called to the ministry, being the first ministers elected in Indiana. In 1845 Heil Hamilton was called to the ministry and began his long and fruitful service.

Nettle Creek, the second congregation, was organized in 1820 by Daniel and Aaron Miller, sons of Jacob Miller. This congregation entertained the Annual Meeting of 1864, the fourth and last time that John Kline, soon to be a martyr, was moderator. It will long be remembered as the home of Lewis W. Teeter, author of *The New Testament Commentary*. Nettle Creek and Four Mile became the forerunners of many other congregations in Indiana. Within eighteen years after the organization of Nettle Creek the following congregations came into being: Ladoga, in 1826; Pyrmont, in 1832; Bachelor Run and Elkhart (now West Goshen), in 1830; Portage, in 1831; Mexico, Eel River, Manchester, and Turkey Creek, in 1838.

Manchester College and Camp Mack have been two important factors in drawing talent to the Indiana churches. Graduates from the college have entered the teaching profession in large numbers. The Home at Mexico has had an enviable record. The state, divided into three districts, has one hundred ten congregations and a total membership of nearly nineteen thousand.

#### ILLINOIS

For Brethren beginnings in Illinois we turn to the George Wolfe family. There were three George Wolfes—all Brethren preachers. In 1787 the first George Wolfe left Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for Fayette County of the same state. He is said to have been the first elder to settle across the Alleghenies. In 1800 he went down the Ohio River on a boat which he had

constructed, and with his family settled at Muhlenberg, Kentucky, where there was already a settlement of Brethren. From here his sons, George and Jacob, went to Union County, Illinois, in 1808. The third George Wolfe was the son of Jacob and became a pioneer preacher in California. In 1809 the first George Wolfe went on a preaching tour in Illinois, where his sons lived, and on to eastern Missouri, where there was a Brethren settlement as early as 1795. On this tour Wolfe died and was buried at Kaskaskia, the first Brethren to preach and be buried in Illinois.

His son, George Wolfe, was the first to be baptized, called to the ministry, and ordained as an elder in Illinois, all of which occurred while he was living in Union County. John Hendricks of Muhlenberg, Kentucky, baptized Wolfe and thirteen others, organized Illinois' first Brethren church and installed Wolfe in the ministry in 1812. A year later John Hochstettler and — Hahn ordained him to the eldership. In 1831 Wolfe moved to Adams County and organized the Mill Creek congregation, later named Liberty. Most of the members from Union County followed him to his new location. He became the leader of the "Far Western Brethren." Another early congregation was Sugar Creek in Sangamon County, organized in 1830.

In northern Illinois the Brethren entered Ogle County in 1836 and Carroll County in 1839. The first Brethren minister in Carroll County was Henry Strickler, who settled at Arnold's Grove in 1841. In 1842

Joseph Emmert and Christian Long, on horseback, came from Pennsylvania, preached, conducted a love feast in a grove, and organized the Arnold's Grove congregation, the first in the northern part of the state. In 1845 Jacob Long and his large family left Hagerstown, Maryland, and came by wagon train to the neighborhood of Maryland, Ogle County. The year following, Samuel Garber, a minister, and family followed. This gave the settlement two ministers for Ogle County. At a love feast in the John Price barn near the Salem settlement in 1846, the West Branch congregation, including all of Ogle County, was organized and the first minister, Isaac Hershey, was elected. In 1857 four churches, Arnold's Grove, West Branch, Franklin Grove, and Yellow Creek met in their first district meeting at West Branch.

Illinois benefited greatly through its interest in the Danish mission (1875), the publishing interests (established in 1876), Mount Morris College (1879), and Bethany Biblical Seminary (1905). These and the church headquarters at Elgin have brought leading members into the district, far beyond what the district itself produced. In 1856 the Annual Meeting was held near Lena. It was at this meeting that the Far Western Brethren came into full fellowship with the main body of the church. Illinois has two state districts, the northern of which includes seven congregations in Wisconsin. Within the state are forty-five congregations and about eight thousand members.



## MICHIGAN

The Brethren did not rush into Michigan as readily as into the other states we have been considering. In recent years the larger cities have brought Brethren into their midst, because of the automobile and allied industries. John Wise, pioneer preacher in several states, found scattered members in Michigan in 1864. Early congregations were: Thornapple (1868), Woodland (1874), Sunfield (1877), and New Haven (1878). There are twenty-seven congregations and approximately three thousand members in the state.

## WISCONSIN

The smallest membership in the states we have been considering is found in Wisconsin. The records show that of the fourteen congregations which have been organized seven survive. The total membership is just over four hundred. The first church was organized by George Studebaker, who came from Indiana to Richland County and organized the Ash Ridge congregation in 1854. In district work Wisconsin is joined with Northern Illinois.

# 8

## *Beyond the Mississippi*

In the last decade of the eighteenth century the Brethren began crossing the Mississippi River, settling first within the present bounds of the State of Missouri. Even then government land grants were not unknown. Before ceding Louisiana to France in 1800 Spain had granted to each of one hundred sixty-four men a tract of three hundred acres for services rendered in punishing certain Indians living near New Madrid. In the list of those sharing in this grant appears the name of Daniel Clingensmith. Why mention him alone from this entire group? Because Daniel Clingensmith was a member of the Church of the Brethren, who in 1795 left his home in Pennsylvania, made his way down the Ohio River to this new settlement, and became one of the first Brethren to cross the Mississippi River. We do not know what special service he had rendered in "punishing" the Indians that he was counted worthy of a grant of land.

### MISSOURI

Other "first" Brethren to cross the Mississippi and settle in this section were John Miller, Peter Baker, and Joseph Niswinger from North Carolina. These all settled in Cape Girardeau County, west of which was

a tribe of friendly Indians. Friendly Indians might have been an inducement for a peace-loving people like the Brethren to settle near them. Who told these North Carolina Brethren about distant Missouri at this time? There was a Major George F. Bollinger who was somewhat of a migration agent. He was granted a large tract of land because he had brought so many families from North Carolina into this section. Speaking of this movement, J. H. Moore stated the opinion that possibly a dozen Pennsylvania Dutch Brethren families may have been in the group. If he is correct in his estimate that would not be a small body with which to begin a Brethren settlement and later a church.

In that period John Hendricks, also from North Carolina, was living in Logan County, Kentucky. Being missionary minded he visited this Brethren group and preached for them. Through his ministrations others were won and baptized. He was the first Brethren minister to cross the Mississippi. In 1810 in the home of John Niswinger he conducted the first love feast ever held west of the Mississippi. It is quite possible that at this time he organized the Cape Girardeau congregation, the farthest west of all the Brethren churches at that time.

The following years for this congregation were rather discouraging. There came that period of unrest and new doctrines which swept across the land, disturbing all denominations. The Brethren were human and subject to human frailties as were others. Universalist preachers proclaimed the doctrine of final restora-

tion and universal salvation for all regardless of faith in Christ or the character of the individual. Some Brethren joined their ranks, some migrated elsewhere, the congregation disintegrated, and the Brethren were without an organization in Missouri until the Cedar church was organized in 1853 or 1854.

The Cedar congregation takes us to the western part of the state, two hundred miles beyond Cape Girardeau. Cedar was then the western point of Brethren settlements. William Gish of Virginia and Indiana was the leading spirit in this new settlement, having arrived there in 1852 or 1853. Another minister was Thomas Miller. There were some seventeen charter members. The central place for preaching was at the Hunter schoolhouse, eight miles from Stockton, the county seat. Of course services were frequently held in private homes. Among other families that settled in the community were the parents of J. H. Moore, who was baptized in this congregation at the age of thirteen in 1856. Later in life Moore made the following statement, which shows the influence of Brother Gish:

In my boyish way of looking at things I regarded Bro. Gish as the best man in the world. I often wished that I could be just as good as he was. In him I had the utmost confidence. I thought that everything he did was just right. I cannot now remember one thing he ever said, and yet I sat and listened to his preaching with the greatest interest. I would have walked five miles any Sunday to hear him preach. I have never gotten entirely beyond the influence of the godly man.

Missouri is divided into three districts with thirty-five congregations that enroll twenty-three hundred

members. In this number is included the one surviving church in Arkansas, with about fifty members. Arkansas was once a separate district, though never large. James R. and Barbara Gish, well known through the Gish Fund books, did considerable work in Arkansas, where the first church was organized in 1880.

Having considered these first congregations beyond the Mississippi River, it will be of interest to note the beginnings in other states of this group: Iowa, 1844; Minnesota, Kansas, and Oregon, 1856; California, 1858; Nebraska, 1868; Washington, 1876; Colorado, 1877; Idaho, 1878; Texas, 1879; Arkansas, 1880; Oklahoma, 1890; Arizona, 1892; North Dakota, 1894; Canada, 1903; New Mexico, 1906.

From this bird's-eye view of the geographical spread of the church in this western region we turn to consider a little more in detail how these beginnings reached out and embraced more territory.

#### IOWA AND MINNESOTA

In 1844 George Wolfe of Illinois organized the first church in Iowa, at Libertyville, with eight charter members and John Garber in charge. This was the first church to be organized west of the Mississippi after the unhappy ending of the Cape Girardeau County organization. In 1858 Libertyville and Dry Creek built the first Brethren meetinghouses west of the Mississippi.

During the fifties, Iowa Brethren settlements were active in forming new congregations. Cedar in 1852, Fairview in 1853, Monroe County in 1854, English



River in 1855, Indian Creek, Dry Creek, Iowa River, and Waterloo in 1856, Greene and Mount Etna in 1857, Franklin County in 1858 and South Keokuk in 1858 or 1859. English River is a splendid example of an Iowa congregation spreading from one to seven congregations. South Waterloo, Ivester, and Panther Creek are outstanding among the denominations as rural churches. There are three districts in Iowa, forty-five congregations, and nearly fifty-four hundred members. These figures, however, include the six congregations in Minnesota with about seven hundred fifty members and the one church in South Dakota with only seven members.

Of the congregations in Minnesota the first were Root River and Lewiston, both organized in 1856.

#### KANSAS

For Brethren beginnings in Kansas we accompany Jacob Ulrich of the Nettle Creek congregation of Indiana as he leads a colony headed for Kansas. In his covered-wagon caravan are Aaron Eller, I. B. Hoover, William Rafe, Daniel Holsinger, and Henry Messenheimer, each with his family—and David Longanecker, single. On October 20, 1855, they arrived at Westport (now Kansas City), where they wintered. In March they followed the Santa Fe Trail to Breckenridge County. By the help of another Hoosier, Peter Ikenberry, they located near the present city of Emporia.

This settlement gave us Cottonwood, the first Kansas Church of the Brethren, organized in the summer of 1856. The charter members were Jacob Ulrich and

wife, I. B. Hoover, Peter Ikenberry, Gabriel Jacobs, wife and daughter, and David Longanecker. Jacobs was a minister and had been preaching for them. In December of that year they held their first love feast. The prevalence of ague caused Ulrich and others to leave the settlement and go to Douglas County, where Washington Creek was organized as the second congregation in 1858, followed by Wolf River in 1859. From Washington Creek came six other congregations: Wade Branch, 1878; Eight Mile, 1880; Pleasant Grove and Appanoose, 1881; Overbrook, 1907; Lone Star, 1920. There are four state districts whose congregations number forty-seven with a total membership of about fifty-five hundred. The establishment of McPherson College proved a boon to all the Brethren communities served by the college, both in Kansas and in other states.

## OREGON

From Kansas to the Pacific coast is a long step, but that is where we must go to find the next churches as we take them chronologically state by state. In 1853 and again in 1854 Jacob W. Wigle reported that some Brethren had come overland to Oregon and settled in the Willamette Valley. Wigle was a nephew of George Wolfe. The first Brethren minister in Oregon was Daniel Leedy, who came from Iowa. He held the first Brethren service in the home of Jacob W. Wigle. Because Leedy was not an elder, the Annual Meeting of 1855, in response to an appeal for ministerial help, authorized him to administer baptism and proceed with church

work. In the fall of 1856 (possibly 1855) the group of twenty-three members met in the home of Philip Biltmore and organized as the South Santaam congregation, later changing the name to Willamette Valley. Not until the seventies was there another congregation in Oregon. The nine congregations in Oregon number approximately eight hundred fifty in their membership lists. The Annual Conference was held in Oregon in 1956.

### CALIFORNIA

In 1856 the third George Wolfe, a minister, left Illinois for California by way of Panama. Being a Wolfe, he could not long live without a church home; so he began preaching. Baptisms increased the membership to twelve during the next year. In the fall of 1858 the first church in California was organized in a grove near Monterey, Santa Clara County. The congregation later migrated to San Joaquin County and became known as the Church of California. The Brethren organized their first congregation in southern California in 1885 at Covina with eighteen members. From this center radiated an influence that led to the many organizations of today.

La Verne College, founded in 1891, has been a strong factor in the growth of Brethren congregations throughout the state and the entire Pacific Coast Region. California has two state districts, each with eighteen organized churches. The total membership is slightly over eighty-seven hundred, which number includes the members in the Arizona congregations. Mo-

desto with nearly six hundred members and La Verne with its membership of almost one thousand are the largest congregations in their respective districts. California entertained the Annual Meeting in 1907, 1928, 1941, and 1951. Climate and fruit possibilities were strong factors that drew the Brethren to California. The gold rush never appealed to the Brethren. Here, as in North Dakota and Washington, colonization played a large part. *Settlement of the Brethren on the Pacific Slope*, by Gladdys Esther Muir, throws much light on the growth of the church throughout this entire region.

#### NEBRASKA

Brethren history in Nebraska begins with the early sixties. Bell Creek (Fontanelle), near Fontanelle, Washington County, was the first congregation organized. The date usually given is 1866, but S. A. Honberger, an early settler, says in a letter, "John Murry of Marshalltown, Iowa, organized the church in September 1868." In 1869 John Forney left Illinois and settled near Falls City. That same year the Silver Creek congregation was organized on October 16 by the above Murry and David Brower of South English, Iowa. Two churches were organized in 1875: Bethel in April and South Beatrice in June. These were followed by Exeter Creek in Fillmore County in 1878 and Alvo (Weeping Water) in Cass County in 1879.

Among the early leaders in Nebraska were J. J. Hoover, J. S. Snowberger, Jesse Y. Heckler, John Forney, Conrad Fitz, David Bechtelheimer, Archie Van

Dyke, and Henry Brubaker. Brubaker was the first minister in the South Beatrice congregation, the largest congregation in the district at present, with a membership of more than two hundred. John P. Crowthers, a large land owner in Gage County, offered a quarter section of land to any Brethren minister who would locate on it. Brubaker accepted the offer and established a Brethren community. This was in 1875, the year South Beatrice was organized. He remained on this farm for eleven years. Later he lived at Nocona, Texas, in Arkansas, and in Oklahoma. Congregations developed in each of these localities.

Nebraska led in holding summer camps when she announced the first Brethren Assembly in 1916. The latest statistics credit the state with eleven churches and about eight hundred members.

#### WASHINGTON

David Brower, who was active in church work in Oregon, extended his labors into Washington and Idaho. Near the close of November 1876 he held meetings for a group of Brethren and on December 2 organized the twelve charter members into the Pataha congregation. Moses Hunt was a minister. Eli J. Thornton was chosen deacon. Two years later it was necessary to disorganize the congregation. Brower was instrumental in organizing the Klickitat Valley church in 1880 with a membership of fifteen, he being chosen elder to be assisted by Allen Ives. There are now sixteen congregations with nearly twenty-eight hundred members.



## COLORADO

The Brethren organized their first Colorado congregation, St. Vrain, near Longmont, in 1877, under the leadership of J. S. Flory and George Fesler. Flory had come from West Virginia. While in Colorado he published a paper, *The Mirror*, that gave him some publicity. He later went to southern California, where he became active in bringing Easterners to that section. The Miami church in New Mexico is affiliated with Colorado, making twelve churches with a total membership of about sixteen hundred fifty. Of these the Rocky Ford congregation, with its three hundred fifty members, is the largest.

## IDAHO

Again it was David Brower who organized the first congregation in Idaho, Palouse Valley, in 1878, near the Washington border. Seventeen members were present at the organization, William R. King being a deacon. As a result of an election held at the time, Thomas Seward was installed in the ministry and Nathan West in the deaconship. This group later became the Moscow congregation. Including Whitefish, in Montana, Idaho has nine congregations with a total membership of over fifteen hundred. It was a red-letter day for Idaho when the Annual Meeting came to Nampa in 1937. This gave many of the members of the Northwest an opportunity to attend their first General Conference. Nampa with almost five hundred members is the largest congregation in the District of Idaho.

## TEXAS

In 1879 two congregations were organized in Texas—Elbow Creek on April 26 and Williams Creek on May 31—the former in Grayson County, the latter in Cook County. At the time of organization each congregation received the letters of eighteen members, some letters being as much as three years old. Soon each of the churches held its first love feast. Texas met in its first district meeting in 1891 with the Nocona congregation. Six churches were represented by delegates and one by letter. At first Texas and Oklahoma were one district. Because of the great distances a division was made, and in 1897 Texas with its six congregations and one hundred thirty-six members held its first district meeting. The six churches in Texas are now divided between two districts; four are in the District of Texas and Louisiana and the other two are in the District of Oklahoma.

## OKLAHOMA

The Brethren did not overlook Oklahoma when it was thrown open for settlement. It is worthy of note that two men, often officers of Annual Meeting, figured in the first church in Oklahoma. These men were Enoch Eby, who was present at the organization, and John Wise, who was chosen as the first elder. All this had to do with the Mount Hope congregation, which was organized on July 31, 1890, with George Landis and J. W. Burns as ministers. There were sixteen charter members. On August 8, 1892, Paradise Prairie, the second

congregation, was organized under the direction of Jacob Appleman, who was then holding a series of meetings. Twenty members were present at the organization and nine others were living near by. In the membership were two ministers. In his *History of the Brethren of Texas and Oklahoma*, J. H. Morris refers to the clash of ideals between the North and the South as the Church of the Brethren has met them. Oklahoma now has fourteen congregations and nearly thirteen hundred members, including two congregations in the Panhandle of Texas, and Clovis in New Mexico.

#### NORTH DAKOTA

The railroads had considerable influence in locating Brethren in North Dakota, Idaho, Washington, and Canada. From those who sought cheap land came the nuclei for new congregations. A. B. Peters, a minister from Indiana, was a leader in bringing many settlers to North Dakota. In the spring of 1894 a group of three hundred fifty-four migrated to the Northwest by special train, carrying humans, stock, household equipment, and machinery. The first church organization was completed on August 4 with eighty-six charter members. This was the Cando church, which, with its one hundred twenty members, is still the largest congregation in the district. Within a few years a number of other congregations were organized. Unfortunately drouth conditions, appeals from other sections, and the tendency of some leaders to move caused many members to migrate elsewhere so that today the district has six churches in

North Dakota and three in Montana, the total membership being just over four hundred.

#### CANADA

From the Northwest it was only a short step into Canada, which was seeking settlers for its unoccupied prairies. At the opening of the twentieth century, Brethren turned their eyes to this section. David and Albert Hollinger were early leaders. On July 26, 1903, Fairview, the first congregation, was organized. At present there are only four organized churches and fewer than three hundred members in Canada, which is our smallest district in North America.

The Brethren in Canada had great expectations that the Annual Meeting of 1923, which was held at Calgary (the only Conference which has been held beyond the borders of the United States), would result in a large settlement of Brethren families in their midst. The railroads made a strong effort to that end. Up to the present that hope has not been realized.

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This hurried sketch of the origin of the churches west of the Mississippi River shows how the Brethren settlements spread throughout the several states until today there are two hundred fifty-three congregations with approximately thirty thousand members of the Church of the Brethren in this area.

## *Annual Meeting*

The Church of the Brethren is grouped around the local congregation, the state district, the region, and the Brotherhood at large, the latter heading in the Annual Meeting. The order of historical development was: the local congregation, the Annual Meeting, the state district, and the region. The Annual Meeting has been known by various names, viz.: Council Meeting, Big Council, Big Meeting, Great Meeting, Yearly Meeting, Annual Meeting, and now more commonly Annual Conference or merely Conference.

The Annual Meeting of the Church of the Brethren is the yearly assembly of duly elected representatives of the church from the local congregations and state districts, and others vitally interested in the problems of the day affecting the denomination as it tries to do its work in the world. From a very small beginning, this meeting has grown into a delegate body of sometimes nearly a thousand and a total attendance of thirty thousand members and others.

### ORIGIN OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting did not originate with the Brethren, but was adopted as a means of unifying the Brotherhood and correcting erroneous teachings as they



might creep into the church from outside influences. In 1741 Count Zinzendorf, head of the Moravian Church in Europe, resigned his bishopric and came to America, taking up his residence at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Tired of the bickerings and persecutions in Europe, he hoped to find in America an opportunity to build a united church. He was greatly grieved when he discovered that, even in this new land, church people had their shortcomings, differed, and were far from friendly toward each other. In their misdirected zeal the German churches spoke very unkindly of each other. Simply crossing the Atlantic had not changed human nature. Zinzendorf himself was shut out of many of the churches, because he was suspected of being a secret messenger of the pope. However, he did find some who shared his views for a united church. One of these was Heinrich Antes, who, with others of like aspirations, called a meeting of all the German sects in and around Philadelphia for New Year's Day of 1742. Of the more than fifty persons who responded to this call five were Brethren, a fact which shows their deep interest in the movement. These five Brethren were Joseph Miller, Andrew Fry, Abraham du Bois, George Adam Martin, and John Peter Jacobs von Larschett.

Chief among the purposes of this meeting were these: to bring about a better feeling and a fuller cooperation of the several German denominations; to help these denominations to cease speaking unkindly of each other; and to put an end to so much neighborhood gossip. Other meetings followed. Though these synodical

meetings had for their chief aim the union of the German denominations, it soon became apparent that the ideals sought were not to be attained and that the people were not yet ready for the millenium. Differences in doctrine and practice led to sharp words. Those who in Europe had rebelled against infant baptism and sprinkling and had suffered persecution because of their faith were not ready to wink at unscriptural practices in America.

The synod was drawing near the breaking point because the Brethren and some of the others could not sanction practices not in accord with their understanding of New Testament teaching. The final rupture came when three Indians, who had been doing effective Christian work, gave their Christian experience and presented themselves for church membership. When these Indians were received into the church by sprinkling, the immersionists withdrew from this third synod, which was held in Germantown on February 21-23, 1742. It should be stated, however, that this same synod did appoint three trustees of "The Church of God in the Spirit," and that one of these three was Andrew Fry, a Brethren minister. Because sentiment for disunion was stronger than the sentiment for union, the attempt failed. Two Brethren, George Adam Martin and Martin Urner, led the Brethren in their withdrawal from the synod.

That same year what may be called the first Annual Meeting of the Brethren was held at Coventry, doubtless in the home of Martin Urner, who probably was the moderator. The purpose of this first meeting

was to unite the Brethren, to fortify them against outside corrupting influences, and to give guidance to the church. We have no record of what transpired. Though we have no minutes of Annual Meeting until 1778, there are good reasons to believe that others were held before that period.

#### EARLY PROBLEMS

Early Annual Meetings were held as follows: Pipe Creek, Maryland, 1778; Conewago, Pennsylvania, 1779; Conestoga, Pennsylvania, 1781. The place of meeting for 1782 is not known, though we have minutes of the session. From the minutes of 1781 we learn that a meeting was held in 1780. Queries dealt with in these early meetings had to do with three vital social problems then disturbing the church: war, liquor, and slavery. It is to the credit of the Church of the Brethren that she then, as ever, stood for peace and temperance and against human slavery. In these and other reform movements she stood on the right side long before the popular mind was much disturbed about these social problems.

#### TRULY DEMOCRATIC

Annual Meeting is a fine type of Brethren democracy. There are two classes of delegates: those from the local congregations and those from the state districts, the latter comprising the Standing Committee. There is no restriction as to the age, sex, or official position of delegates. As the name of the gathering indicates, the sessions are held annually.

Business for Annual Meeting may arise in the local congregation and pass through the district meeting to Annual Meeting; or it may arise through certain boards or committees that have been granted the privilege to present such matters as pertain especially to their own workings. The character of the business presented to Annual Meeting has varied through the years. There was a period in which many "queries" were presented for answers. There were times when the business presented was largely of a local or personal nature, in which case Conference was wont to prescribe minute rules of form and conduct. At that time many committees were sent to adjust church troubles. During those years discussions were stern and long. For that reason there were rules limiting the length and number of speeches made by one individual on one question.

In recent years, while these rules are retained, there is little use for them, as the publication of the business in the *Gospel Messenger* and in the *Conference Booklet* enables all to study the problems and know their import. Further, since much of the church administration has been committed to regular boards and committees there is ample opportunity for all to know just how church matters are managed. This has led to a confidence and an understanding that make for unity of thought and action. The business sessions of Annual Meeting are a big open forum in which all may take part, though the voting is limited to the regularly appointed delegates.

Originally Annual Meeting was held at the time of

Pentecost. As the church spread over wider areas, climatic and other conditions called for a change. At present the sessions begin not earlier than the sixth day of June. The place of meeting was long subject to the call of congregations, later of state districts, then of Conference regions. In 1940 the territory was divided into five Conference zones: Pacific, Southeastern, Western, Eastern, and Central, and, beginning with 1941, each zone is entitled to the Conference every fifth year in the order just named.

The officers of Annual Meeting are: moderator, who may serve two years in five but may not succeed himself; assistant moderator, who is elected for one year and may not succeed himself; secretary, who is elected for a period of three years and may succeed himself; reader, who is elected for a year and may not succeed himself. There are also a messenger and an assistant messenger to serve the officers and Standing Committee.

## TWO PARTS

There have developed two parts to the Conference: the business session and the inspirational session. The business session deals with matters presented by state districts, boards, and committees. The inspirational sessions consist of studies, addresses, sermons, and conferences, general and sectional, in which set programs are presented. The Conference Program Committee is responsible for planning all but the business session. In planning the program the committee consults the boards



and the several interests so that there are mutual co-operation and understanding.

It has been suggested that it might be well to meet biennially rather than annually, but the suggestion has never taken deep root. From time to time the expense of holding Annual Meetings was discussed. Some have felt that the outlay is too great for the benefits accruing. Others—and that means the great majority—believed that the inspiration, the union, and the greater outlook carried away from these meetings justified all that they cost. It is true that the great church leaders are regularly found at Annual Meeting.

The attendance at the early Annual Meetings was very small because the membership was small. As the membership grew the attendance increased to such a degree that it became a burden for a local group to care for the meeting. In those days all entertainment was free. Repeated efforts were made to decrease the attendance. The time came when there were few or no calls for the next meeting. Finally Annual Meeting granted the privilege to the meeting of 1880 to make a nominal charge for meals. The managers set the price for a meal ticket for men, for the entire session, at one dollar; for women no price was set. For many years now each individual bears his own expense of entertainment, which plan has given general satisfaction.

At the present time the sessions begin Tuesday evening and continue through Sunday, although the General Brotherhood Board and other groups meet several

days earlier and some interest groups may remain for a day or more after Conference closes. The high points are found in the address of the moderator and in the Sunday sessions, especially in the consecration service. The address on this occasion is delivered on some live theme. The presence of veteran missionaries, the consecration of outgoing missionaries, of Brethren Service workers, and of home mission workers by the laying on of hands, and the generous offerings from the local congregations and the assembled thousands leave a never-to-be-forgotten scene with the assembled throng.

## *District Meeting*

The Brethren have always stressed the Christian family, considering it basic in national and church life. They look upon the local congregation as one large family with many interests in common. As in the family there are frequent consultations on problems affecting the common good, so in the local congregations there are occasions when the entire membership is interested in common problems. Being a democratic body, the Church of the Brethren considers these problems in the council meeting of the local congregation rather than in the official group as do denominations with an episcopal form of government. From this council meeting of the local church developed the council meeting of a group of local congregations, which has taken the name of district meeting. Among the ends sought through district meetings are fellowship, unity, evangelization, and mutual helpfulness. We turn now to the evolution of the district meeting.

### ORIGIN OF THE DISTRICT MEETING

The first mention of district meetings by Annual Conference is found in Article 23 of the Annual Meeting minutes of 1856, which reads:

A proposal for forming districts of five, six, or more adjoining churches, for the purpose of meeting jointly at least once a year, settling difficulties, etc., and thus lessening the business of our Yearly Meeting.

Answer: We believe this plan to be a good one, if carried out in the fear of the Lord.

Whence came this suggestion and what gave rise to it? For an answer we turn to the book, *Life of John Kline* (pages 365, 366), where we read:

Friday, February 29, 1856. Council Meeting at the Brick church, in Augusta County. Today we discuss the question of the propriety of making a move to more generally propagate the Gospel. Most of the brethren and sisters present seemed to be heartily in favor of the move. One brother, John Harshberger, said: "If the Gospel is not true, let us eat and drink like other beasts, for tomorrow we die; but if the Gospel be true—and thanks be to God, for we know it is true—it is worthy of all acceptance; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. . . . I am in favor of trying to do more in every way than we have ever yet attempted, to spread the good news."

Such was the spirit of that Friday council meeting when missions gripped the Virginia Brethren. Nor was their enthusiasm mere sentiment. Then and there they appointed a committee consisting of Benjamin F. Moomaw, — Nininger, John Harshberger, and John Kline to draw up a "memorial on the subject, to place it before the next Annual Meeting." This "memorial," which is quoted above, was favorably acted upon by Annual Meeting a few months later. It is possible that this Virginia council meeting was to all purposes a district meeting. At any rate it shows the democratic spirit and practice of the church.

### EARLY MEETINGS

The Annual Meeting of 1856 was held in northern Illinois, which at that time had only four congregations. In the spring of 1857 these four congregations met in a "big council," their first district meeting. The district continued meeting annually in district meeting, and has on record the complete minutes from 1860 to the present. Virginia continued to hold these meetings. Milford (presumably Indiana) held such a meeting in 1857. John Umstad called such a meeting to be held at Philadelphia on September 22, 1860. On May 9, 1861, a district meeting was held at Mt. Union, Pennsylvania. Other districts began holding these meetings, and now all districts have their sessions annually.

### HOW CONDUCTED

Actions of Annual Meeting are meant to guide the church-at-large in its activities. District meetings have as their purpose the direction of affairs in their own territories. For a while Annual Meeting advised against keeping permanent records of the district meetings because their action was for local and temporary direction. It was feared that to keep permanent records might give undue prestige to district action. It was soon discovered, however, that this fear was groundless, and now the minutes of district meetings are printed and become a valuable source in tracing the development of church activities.

The Annual Meeting of 1866 gave to district meetings a standing not before enjoyed. The previous An-



nual Meeting had appointed a committee of fourteen leading brethren to draw up plans for both Annual Meeting and district meetings. The following points were covered:

1. Each state was to form itself into convenient districts.

2. District meetings were to be conducted much like the common council meetings and held in simple fashion.

3. Records might be kept but they should not be published.

4. District meetings should endeavor to settle all questions of a local nature.

5. Questions that concern the Brotherhood in general should be carried to Annual Meeting.

6. However, all questions that could not be settled by the district meetings should be referred to Annual Meeting. These questions "should be correctly and carefully stated."

7. "All queries from district meetings should be accompanied with an answer."

8. In case district meeting could not agree on any answer the query should be referred to Standing Committee, which was to form an answer before presenting the query to the "General Council."

9. "And it is considered very desirable, and indeed necessary, that in all cases in answering questions, both in district and Annual Meetings, some Scripture author-

ity or reason be given for the decision, though it should be done as briefly as possible.”

10. No business shall come before district meeting until it has passed the local church in which it originated.

11. But any member falling under the judgment of the church, if dissatisfied with the decision, may appeal to Annual Meeting by presenting a petition signed by a number of the members.

12. Any member may appear before Standing Committee to offer anything that cannot be brought before that body in the prescribed manner, and the members of Standing Committee shall hear him and dispose of the matter as they deem proper.

13. The church entertaining district meeting shall entertain the brethren and sisters privately, and without the public boarding tent at which the mixed multitude had been entertained before.

14. All churches should continue to have the privilege of calling on the “General Council-meeting” for committees to investigate grievances as formerly.

Thus did Annual Meeting state the conditions under which district meetings should operate. Not all, however, were in sympathy with these provisions. The Conference of 1871 was asked if it were not better to dispense with district meetings entirely and also to go back to the plan of 1848 for conducting Annual Meeting. (The same Conference that adopted the new plan for district meeting also adopted revised plans for hold-

ing Annual Meeting.) Conference did not agree with this reactionary element, but thought "it best not to make the change asked for."

At present we have forty-eight state districts in the United States. State districts do not always correspond with state lines. Two states have five districts each; others combine to form one district. Outside the United States are Western Canada, China (present circumstances not known), Nigeria, First India, and Second India.

State districts have their boards and committees, such as ministerial, mission, religious education, homes, and colleges; also departmental boards and committees, such as children's work, junior-hi work, youth work, young adult work, men's work, and women's work. In recent years there has been a tendency to reduce the number of boards and organize under one general board.

#### CHARACTER OF BUSINESS

Once much of the time at district meeting was taken up with the discussion of problems relating to personal conduct. Now most of the problems deal with missions, education in its many phases, family life, temperance, peace, Sunday-school and ministerial problems, age groups, and camps. Some districts hold these district meetings purely for business and meet for their inspirational sessions at other times when many of the above problems are considered. The officers are usually moderator, assistant moderator, secretary, and reader. These

are elected annually except the secretary, who in many districts is elected for a term of years and may succeed himself, while other officers do not as a rule succeed themselves.

The late summer and autumn months have become favorites for holding district meetings, a number of them being held over Labor Day. As a rule, lodging is provided by the congregation entertaining the meeting, and meals are furnished at the church at a nominal cost. In some districts the attendance runs into large numbers, while in weak and scattered districts it is small.

The voting body at district meeting is made up of the delegates from the local congregations. Each congregation of two hundred or fewer members is entitled to two delegates. Congregations of more than two hundred members may have one additional delegate for each additional two hundred members. Women may serve as delegates and often outnumber the men.

District meeting has been a potent factor in co-ordinating, uniting, and developing the congregations and the individual members. It was in a special district meeting of Northern Illinois and Wisconsin held in 1875 that the Danish Mission was born. And this movement led to the formation of the General Mission Board (now the Foreign Mission Commission of the General Brotherhood Board) and all our foreign missionary activity. Here we see how district meetings, born in a council where missions were being considered, have retained the spirit of world-wide missions to the present.

## *The Press*

The pioneers of the Church of the Brethren were educated, consecrated, and missionary. When we consider the times in which they lived, the means which they possessed, and the opportunities afforded we see that they laid firm foundations on which to build. Their unshaken faith in peace as the proper way of adjusting national and international differences made them unpopular in periods of war, led to the spoiling of their goods, and drove them into seclusion. The period from the Revolution to the middle of the nineteenth century was a dark one for our church. The membership did not mingle freely with "the world" or fellowship with other denominations. The confiscation of the Sower press deprived them of the printed page, which resulted in indifference to education. Secondary education, colleges, and an educated ministry were frowned upon. There were, however, some who saw further and felt keenly what the church was losing by maintaining this attitude. These men advocated a church paper, church schools, and a more aggressive missionary effort. These three factors—the church paper, the church school, and the spreading of the gospel—were primary interests in arousing the church and giving us what we enjoy today. We turn to the church press.

## CHURCH PAPERS

When one considers what came from the Sower press, one wonders what would have been the record of the church if that press had continued to pour out its literature from the Revolution to the Civil War. That press turned out for the colonists schoolbooks, hymn-books, the first complete Bible in a European language, the first book on pedagogy, the first religious magazine, many treatises on moral and religious subjects, a newspaper, and the famous Sower *Almanac*, besides much other material. Though the first printing was in German only, later publications were in both German and English. With the loss of the press came loss of information, the loss of vision, and the loss of leadership. To repair that loss was a monumental task.

*The Gospel Visitor*

For the restoration of the press we are indebted to Henry Kurtz, who had been scholastically trained for the Lutheran ministry. During his ministry he published a little paper along with his pastoral duties. His Bible and historical studies caused him to become dissatisfied with his church relations. This finally led to his being disfellowshipped. He decided to cast his lot with the Brethren because their faith and practice seemed to him to conform more nearly to New Testament teaching. When he united with the Brethren he brought with him his training, his knowledge of printing, and his devotion to God's Word. He saw the need of a church



paper to lead and unify the church. In 1833 and again in 1836 he sent up trial balloons but discovered that the church was not yet ready for what he knew she must have ere long. He labored on, and in April 1851 sent out the first copy of the *Monthly Gospel Visitor*. Annual Meeting had said that there was no good reason why he could not print the paper as a private enterprise. At the time Kurtz was living near Poland, Ohio, and had his print shop in a springhouse. Most of the membership was indifferent to this new enterprise, some subscribed, and a few supported it enthusiastically.

### *The Christian Family Companion and the Pilgrim*

This was a small beginning, but it led to great ends. Not the least result was that Kurtz discovered James Quinter and Henry R. Holsinger and secured their services on his publication. These two men, widely different in many respects, became outstanding editors and leaders in the church.

While employed by Kurtz, Holsinger had urged the publication of a weekly paper. Kurtz and Quinter, however, thought that the church would not yet support a weekly. This led Holsinger to begin a weekly of his own, the *Christian Family Companion*, first published at Tyrone, Pennsylvania, in January 1865.

In the course of time Henry Kurtz dropped out of the publication business, which was taken over by his son, H. J. Kurtz, and James Quinter. It fell to the lot of Quinter to do the writing. Quinter was mild and

considerate; Holsinger was bold and aggressive, and his impulsiveness caused him to make many harsh statements which were not always acceptable to his readers. Quinter's mild and conciliatory writing helped win favor for his publication. He had as assistant editor J. W. Beer, who later became well known through his editorial career.

In 1870, H. B., George, and J. B. Brumbaugh began publishing the *Pilgrim* at James Creek, Pennsylvania. The policy of this paper fell between that of the *Christian Family Companion* and the *Gospel Visitor*.

### *Consolidation*

At the close of 1873, Quinter secured full control of the *Christian Family Companion* as well as the *Gospel Visitor* and united them into one weekly, with headquarters at Dale City (now Meyersdale), Pennsylvania. The paper was published under the awkward title, the *Christian Family Companion and Gospel Visitor*, until 1876, when it was renamed the *Primitive Christian*.

Because the *Primitive Christian* and the *Pilgrim* stood for practically the same policy, the publishers decided that it would be wise to consolidate and thus increase the service and diminish expense. This was in 1877, and the place of publication finally settled upon was Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. The new paper was known as the *Primitive Christian and Pilgrim*.

While this consolidation was taking place, a new paper was being born at Lanark, Illinois. The title of this new paper was the *Brethren at Work*, the first issue

being dated September 14, 1876. Promoters and editors were J. H. Moore from Champaign, Illinois, J. T. Myers from Germantown, Pennsylvania, and M. M. Eshelman from Lanark. Myers had some slight knowledge of printing, but Moore and Eshelman were novices at the business. At this time Lewis A. Plate—who had worked in the print shop of James Quinter at Meyersdale and that of the Brumbaughs at Huntingdon, had established a German paper, *Der Brüderbote*, at Lancaster in 1875, and had combined his German paper with a new proposition offered by J. T. Myers of Germantown, an English paper, the *Brethren's Messenger*—became the chief printer for the *Brethren at Work* and for half a century remained with our publishing interests.

### *The Progressive Christian*

Here we pause to name three other church papers because of the part they played in our story. In 1879 Henry R. Holsinger began publishing the *Progressive Christian* at Berlin, Pennsylvania. In 1880 S. H. Bashor and others established the *Gospel Preacher* at Ashland, Ohio. Both of these papers championed the policy of what was known as the Progressive faction of the church. After the division, the *Progressive Christian* became the *Brethren Evangelist*, the present publication of the Brethren Church. Samuel Kinsey founded the *Vindicator* at Dayton, Ohio, in 1870. This monthly catered to the Old Order element and since the division in the eighties continues to be the official publication of that part of the church.

### *The Gospel Messenger*

For a time after the rupture of the eighties the church papers printed much that was of a hostile nature, one party denouncing the other. Finally the editors agreed among themselves that such a course was contrary to the Christian spirit and each tried to serve his own constituency, as it was evident that the division had come to stay.

The editors of the *Primitive Christian and Pilgrim* and the *Brethren at Work* decided to consolidate their papers. The result was the *Gospel Messenger* in 1883, with the main plant at Mount Morris, Illinois, and an eastern office at Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. This combination was a forceful factor in the growth of the church. The editorial staff was efficient and strong, the finances were assured as the support of the membership went to the one organization, and the policy of the paper was forward looking. Peace reigned within the church and the membership increased as never before. Sunday schools, colleges, and missions came into their own. The church paper wielded a mighty influence in the right direction.

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL LITERATURE

Sunday-school publications fall into two classes: papers and quarterlies. We shall consider these two groups.

#### *Papers*

At the close of 1872 H. J. Kurtz announced a children's paper, printed at Poland, Ohio, as "the only pa-

per for children published in the Brotherhood and the pioneer of its class." The paper was illustrated. All through 1874 it was advertised in the *Christian Family Companion*. When it was first published and how long, the writer has not been able to discover. *Thirty-three Years of Missions* says it was still published in 1879. We may well consider it our first children's paper.

In 1876 the Brumbaugh brothers began publishing the *Young Disciple*. In 1878 J. H. Moore and M. M. Eshelman started the *Children at Work*. In 1879 S. Z. Sharp put out *Our Sunday School*, which, with the *Children at Work*, had a checkered career of only a few years. The *Young Disciple* survived.

In 1895 the *Children at Work* was revived; it continued under that name until 1932, when it became *Our Children*. In 1949 it was given its present title, *Tell Me*.

The *Young Disciple* had the field to itself until 1906, when it became *Our Boys and Girls*. Its present title, *Journeys*, was given to it in the general renaming of our Sunday-school papers in 1949. It is intended for readers of the junior age.

Also in 1906 *Our Young People* made its appearance. For many years it enjoyed the reputation of being the most widely circulated weekly publication put out by the church. In 1949 it was given the title by which it is known today, *Horizons*.

These papers, all fully illustrated, bring into Brethren homes stimulating reading that is a mighty force in shaping the lives of our people and the policy of the church.

There is likelihood that the church will begin publication of a story paper for readers of the junior-high age in the near future (1957).

The magazine for teachers partakes of the nature of both a paper and a quarterly. It dates back to 1899, when it was known as the *Teacher's Quarterly*. In 1907 it went onto a monthly basis and was titled the *Teacher's Monthly*. In 1942 it was renamed the *Bible Study Monthly*, and in the near future (1957) it will likely be renovated and enlarged into a more general magazine for church-school leaders.

### *Quarterlies*

When the Brethren organized their first Sunday schools they had no lesson helps of their own. Some used the publications of other denominations. Some began with a study of Matthew's Gospel and continued on in the New Testament, each teacher setting his own pace. Others made use of the publications of the American Sunday School Union. Among these publications may be mentioned primers, spellers, and readers. These books, much like those used in the day schools, were freely used by other denominations also. You may recall that the Sunday school established by Robert Raikes was largely a day school on Sunday for the poorer children. In the course of years the church has developed a fine group of lesson helps, both for the uniform lessons and for the graded lessons.

Until 1916 the quarterlies for the uniform lessons were the *Advanced Quarterly* (published regularly from



1886) and the *Juvenile Quarterly* (published from 1891 to 1915). The years 1916 to 1918 were the period of readjustment. In January 1916 came the *Primary Quarterly* and the *Junior Quarterly*. The *Home Department Quarterly* dates from 1917 and the *Intermediate Quarterly* from 1918. At present the uniform lessons are used with two age groups, appearing in the *Brethren Youth Quarterly* and the *Brethren Adult Quarterly*.

For many years graded lessons have been in use. Because of the expense of getting out such a series, the church was slow in crowding the matter. Graded lessons published by other denominations have been brought into use. First these were used as printed; later, revisions and adaptations were made by our own editors and Brethren-imprint editions were made. Co-operative arrangements have been made with a number of denominations. Graded lessons (which are produced variously by the Brethren, through co-operation or by imprint) are now used exclusively in the junior-high age group and below.

The basic outlines of almost all Brethren curricula are produced through the co-operative procedures of the National Council of Churches.

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

There have been other publications, some of them aspiring to a high literary standard. Of these the first was the *Pious Youth*, edited and published by Henry R. Holsinger in 1870 and 1871. This was a monthly publication. Because of a lack of patronage the last issue

closed with these words: "Soon we all must die, as does YOUTH." Thus ended a noble endeavor.

The Brumbaugh brothers, assisted by Adaline Hohf, brought out the *Golden Dawn* in 1885. This was the second attempt at a literary monthly. Notwithstanding the fine material published, the second volume still showed a financial loss and the editors pleaded for a more liberal support. During its third year the publication was suspended.

In 1899 the Brethren Publishing House, then located at Mount Morris, Illinois, began publishing the *Pilot*, a new weekly, with Grant Mahan as editor. During the second year Howard Miller became editor, and the name was changed to the *Inglenook*. This was more pretentious than its predecessors, served a larger constituency, and promised well for the future. There were frequent changes in the editorship, and in April 1913 the *Inglenook* was numbered with the papers that had been. One chief reason for discontinuing it was the growth of *Our Young People*, which was largely covering the same field and, besides, had become popular through its circulation through the Sunday school.

The Brethren have not been diligent in recording and preserving historical records. However, the Bicentennial Celebration in 1908, along with other anniversaries since then, has created a lively interest in trying to dig out the old records. It remained for Floyd E. Mallott to make real a historical magazine. In July 1939 he began issuing *Schwarzenau*, a quarterly historical magazine, which printed researches made by students, teach-

ers, and others. Unfortunately, the journal did not receive adequate support either financially or author-wise, and the last number appeared in 1942, after but three short years of publication.

A more recent attempt has been made to provide a scholarly mouthpiece for Brethren authors. The first number of the quarterly journal, *Brethren Life and Thought*, bore the dateline "Autumn 1955." This magazine is intended to serve the whole gamut of religious scholarship rather than just the historical. It is sponsored by an association which claims a widespread membership across the Brotherhood rather than being tied to any individual or official body of the church. Edward K. Ziegler serves as the first editor-in-chief. The magazine has had an auspicious beginning and promises to take a significant role in our publications program.

#### A FINAL WORD

The Brethren press is accomplishing a great work. The church membership is supporting it loyally. The larger denominations marvel at the subscription list of the *Gospel Messenger*. Their own constituency shows no such loyalty. Consider a few facts.

The Brethren Publishing House was presented to the church as a gift in 1897. In 1899 it moved from Mount Morris to Elgin, where it has developed into a large institution. From 1881 to the present it has made few changes in its policy and managers. The managers until 1940 were Joseph Amick, T. F. Imler and R. E. Arnold, Amick and Arnold serving all but one year of

that period. In 1940 the fourth manager, Elmer M. Hersch, took charge; in 1949 he was succeeded by Earl H. Kurtz. During the period of church ownership of the Publishing House, large sums have been turned over to the Brotherhood treasury.

As a rule the editors as well as managers have served for long periods, some of them for more than thirty years.

(For a list of Brethren publications with detailed information, turn to pages 185-189.)

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## *Brethren Schools*

Figures may be dry but they often paint vivid pictures. According to the *Yearbook* for 1956 there are six Brethren colleges and one seminary. The regular students enrolled number three thousand seventy-four, of whom one thousand four hundred fifty-two are members of the Church of the Brethren, seventeen hundred four belong to other denominations, and one hundred twenty-six make no profession. In addition to this number there are one thousand three hundred thirty-nine students enrolled in summer schools and extension courses. Faculty members totaling two hundred sixty-eight serve these students. The total net assets of these seven institutions are reported to be well over \$9,000,000.00.

### GROWING SENTIMENT

It is a far cry between the above and the time when Brethren were opposed to higher education, advised against sending their children to college, and thought a member should not teach in college or help manage one. During all that period, however, there were some who saw further and understood better. It was through these men of vision that the thirst for education was kept alive and the interest in education, so prevalent

in the early church, was revived. From 1852 to 1874 the Brethren made nine attempts to establish schools, only to meet with failure. And yet one may be mistaken as to what is a failure. After one of Edison's experts had tried a thousand experiments he exclaimed, "A thousand attempts and no progress." "Not so," said Edison. "We now know a thousand things that will not work." So it has been with our early attempts to start schools. These attempts were steps leading to better methods. A list of all the schools will be found beginning on page 189.

The first school that endured the test of years was Huntingdon Normal School and Collegiate Institute, now Juniata College, established at Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, in 1876. Other Brethren institutions that reached senior college rank were: Mount Morris Seminary and Collegiate Institute, later Mount Morris College, Mount Morris, Illinois (1879-1932); Spring Creek Normal and Collegiate Institute, Spring Creek, Virginia (1880), later Bridgewater College; McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas (1888); Lordsburg College, La Verne, California (1891), later La Verne College; Manchester College and Bible School, North Manchester, Indiana (1895), later Manchester College; Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania (1900); Blue Ridge College, New Windsor, Maryland (1899). To this number should be added Bethany Bible School, Chicago, Illinois (1905), later Bethany Biblical Seminary. Those surviving have become more than local institutions and their contribution to home, church, and state has been considerable.



## CHARACTER OF THE FOUNDERS

The founders of these schools had much in common. In general they were unselfish, seeking not so much their own as the welfare of others, especially of the younger generation, and the future of the church. They were deeply religious and had a broad outlook. They were of that class that dream dreams and see visions. Some were visionary but others made their dreams come true. Their sympathy caused them to feel for young people who were eager for an education. They craved the best conditions under which these young folks could secure their education. They felt that state-controlled and other educational institutions did not and could not throw around their students the religious environment necessary for the richest development of a student body. They further saw that other denominational schools, as a rule, would not stress the way of life which the Church of the Brethren desired to see implanted during college days. There seemed to be only one way out of this dilemma—Brethren schools controlled by Brethren managers and teachers.

## THE BIBLE IN OUR SCHOOLS

So deeply was this moral and religious principle imbedded in Brethren schools that the mercenary idea found little place. Teachers were willing to work for low salaries because they desired to implant certain ideals. Expenses for students were kept at a minimum so that even the least wealthy families might send their children. The Bible was given a prominent place in the

courses offered. Attendance at daily chapel exercises for Bible instruction, prayer, and fellowship was required on the part of all. Sunday-school and church attendance was a regular part of the weekly program. Prayer meeting, mission study, and literary societies called for hours each week. So deeply is this religious conception imbedded in Brethren schools that even to-day, though we have Bethany Biblical Seminary for ministers, missionaries, and other church workers, each of the six colleges maintains a healthy Bible department which is well patronized.

It was in the colleges that the Bible institute for the local congregation, or for a group of congregations, originated. For many years the special Bible terms at the colleges, continuing from one to four weeks, drew large numbers of ministers and other church workers. These Bible terms still continue, though somewhat different in character. All this shows how the spirit of Bible study, under which the church originated, refuses to drop out of the life of the Church of the Brethren, even in the colleges.

This Bible study in the schools has led to a deeper and sounder interpretation of the Word of God. On one occasion at a special Bible term at Mount Morris College the question arose as to whether a certain statement in the New Testament should close with a period or a question mark. To settle the matter a committee was appointed to study the Greek wording and report. In the investigation the committee discovered that when the New Testament was written no punctuation was used,

and further, that the words were not separated as now but a whole line was written as one word. This was all new to many in the class who learned for the first time that men introduced punctuation and the separate printing of words as a convenience for the reader. They then saw how and why men often differ widely in their interpretation of what they read in the Bible. And it made them more cautious in their own application of its statements.

The colleges have been centers of evangelism. Especially in the earlier years of the colleges, evangelistic meetings won many for Christ and the church who were not reached in the home environment. The colleges have been a leading factor in helping hundreds to enter the ministry and the mission field. These were natural fruits of college teaching and association. The students, in their association with the faculty and in their studies, discovered the difference between the material and the spiritual, and were led to choose the better part.

#### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

Outstanding features in Brethren colleges have been the social and economic life. Students often have been wont to joke about the college dormitory and dining hall, but deep in their hearts they know that each of these has been a most helpful part of their college life. Costs at Brethren colleges have always been very moderate. Present-day students hardly believe that in the earlier days of our colleges the year's expense for tuition, board, and room ranged from \$120 to \$140. Of

course this small amount provided few extra frills, but it did furnish the essentials—nourishing, but simple, food; plain, but serviceable, rooms; teachers of low salaries but high ideals; and endless opportunities to do many things for themselves rather than paying someone else to do them. This was in the days before good roads and the automobile. Many students who lived only twenty-five miles from college seldom went home during a term because they felt they could not stand the expense. These conditions combined to teach the students how to live together and get along with little money, and that is no small or unimportant part of one's education for later life.

The colleges prepared young folks for wider service. First to appeal to them was teaching in public schools. It is well known that graduates of Brethren colleges have made a fine reputation in the teaching profession. School boards, superintendents, and principals have discovered that there are three basic essentials for successful teaching—knowledge of the subject, skill in presentation, and character. An examination may determine the extent of knowledge; the schoolroom may reveal the teacher's skill; the later life of the students reveals the character of the teacher. College teachers who think the development of upright character in their students is no part of their task find small place in Brethren colleges. Our colleges turn out men and women of sturdy character. That sturdy character makes them strong citizens.

## LAWYERS

Fields other than teaching have appealed to Brethren college students. Many have entered business; others find the several professions inviting. How do they conduct themselves in these new activities? Here is an example. Only recently have Brethren entered the practice of law, the church long holding that a people who avoid the courts as much as possible should not practice law at the bar. Naturally not many are lawyers and the criminal lawyer is not known among them. A Brethren pastor who was then also a practicing lawyer was asked how he handled divorce cases. His reply was: "In my short practice I have had only eight of these cases. In seven of them I succeeded in an amicable adjustment between the parties so that no divorce resulted. In the eighth case, I am sorry to say, I failed." He may never become popular as a divorce lawyer, but he certainly is on the right road in helping husbands and wives so to adjust their differences and conduct themselves that their homes shall not be broken up.

## PROGRESS

When S. Z. Sharp founded Kishacoquillas Seminary in Pennsylvania in 1861 he may have been the only member of the Church of the Brethren at the time who had a college degree. When the Brethren first established schools they found it necessary to fill their faculties largely by those not members of their own denomination. Not so now. Their own and other colleges every year turn out many Brethren who are being awarded



college degrees, and the church's own men and women, in a large measure, hold the teaching positions in her colleges. One of the conditions demanding a theological seminary was higher educational standards in the pew, which called for a corresponding rise in the standard of pulpit ministration. At the same time the pew recognized that not all education is confined to the college and the seminary, and gave due consideration to those deprived of higher education who have secured in the school of life that experience and training which enabled them to render efficient service to their parishioners. This Christian consideration helped to bridge what might have become a serious problem.

Bethany Biblical Seminary, now recognized as a standard seminary, is the direct outgrowth of Brethren colleges, with their Bible departments and the Bible institutes and Bible terms, along with the Sunday school and a united forward step in the educational and religious field. The seminary originated in the creative minds of Albert C. Wieand and Emanuel B. Hoff, two ministers who saw the need, were willing to begin at the level which the ministry could appreciate, and little by little developed an institution serving the needs of the constituency. These men, like the founders of our other educational institutions, brooded much over the actual needs, sacrificed to meet those needs, and thought little of themselves.

The church will never be able to repay properly the consecrated men who founded the Church of the



Brethren, who spread her throughout the world, who led into new paths and unstintingly gave all that they had to promote the Master's cause. Among those who made large contributions along these lines stand the leaders in education.

(For a list of schools established and details concerning the same turn to pages 189-191.)

# 13

## *To Other Lands*

The early Church of the Brethren was missionary minded and aggressive, both in Germany and in America. Missions were carried on by the local church as there was no general organization. There came, however, a period in which missionary indifference seized many. But at all times there were those preachers who carried the gospel far and wide as they trudged along on foot, rode their horses, were carried along in their own vehicles, and later traveled by train. By the middle of the nineteenth century there was a general awakening, and strong sentiment for missionary endeavor was developing. In 1868 Annual Meeting recommended and adopted an enlarged plan for more extensive missionary effort. The carrying of the gospel across the sea was forced upon the church from without rather than from within its own membership. Fascinating is the story which reveals how the church was led into missions abroad.

Before Jesus went back to the Father He told His disciples that they were to preach the gospel in all the world. Not until persecuted in and around Jerusalem did the apostles venture far in obeying His injunction. Only when Denmark called did the Church of the

Brethren wake up to its full obligation and great opportunity.

#### A CALL TO DENMARK

Christian Hope of Denmark became dissatisfied with the church as he found it in his native land. His preaching brought him into conflict with the government and led him to prison. He came to America where in vain he sought the Brethren, of whose faith and practice he had read in a note in church history. Finally he was directed to Carroll County, Illinois, where he met George D. Zollers of the Hickory Grove congregation. His interviews led him to accept the Brethren faith and become a member by baptism on October 24, 1874. Hope at once became active in the church. He kept up correspondence with friends in Denmark. Christian Hansen became interested in the Brethren and urged Hope to have someone sent to Denmark to baptize him. The story goes that, when Hope showed his letter to the members, they told him to ask Hansen to come to America to be baptized. Hansen replied to Hope that he must be mistaken in his choice of a church, as Jesus bade His followers to go into all the world, make disciples, baptize, and teach them. If the Brethren did not follow Jesus in this, their church could not be His church. This put the question squarely before the church. What could be done?

*November 12, 1875*

There was as yet no General Mission Board or similar organization in the Brotherhood. Northern Illinois

met in a special district meeting in the Cherry Grove meetinghouse on November 12, 1875. Mark that historic date in Brethren missionary history. After most serious discussion it was decided to heed the call from Denmark, which was considered similar to Paul's Macedonian call. Further, it was decided to call some brother to the ministry—one who could speak Danish—and that *all* the members present should be granted the privilege of voting, not only those from Cherry Grove, which had the only two brethren who spoke Danish. When the votes were counted all but two were for Hope. Presumably these two had been cast by Brother and Sister Hope.

Next it was voted that Hope with his family should return to Denmark, and that Enoch Eby and Paul Wetzel with their wives should go to Denmark at the proper time to help establish the Church of the Brethren in that distant land. In early 1876 the Hopes sailed for Denmark. On May 5 Hansen was baptized. In the fall of 1877 the Ebys and Daniel Fry and wife sailed. (Fry was substituted for Paul Wetzel.) While they were in Denmark the church was fully organized.

### *Two Dollars per Congregation*

What about expenses? Northern Illinois assumed all expense. It was estimated that about \$800 a year would be required for the Hope family. The expenses of the deputation were estimated at \$2,000. Not a small sum for a small district to underwrite, but enthusiasm ran high. When my parents came home on the evening of that special district meeting they spoke of the deep

interest and the profound seriousness of the proceedings. To cross the ocean then was considered by the inexperienced almost certain death, and those who risked such an adventure were counted as already lost to their families.

Northern Illinois reported its action to Annual Conference. Some questioned; some approved; some were enthusiastic. At that time there were some four hundred congregations. Conference approved and suggested that each congregation contribute two dollars toward a fund to support the Danish mission—not a large sum, but a start. This was the first effort toward a united front in support of missions abroad. What was the result? The contributions fell far short of the amount required. Northern Illinois made up the deficit. Slowly the church was grasping the need of and the opportunity offered by missions.

The mission in Denmark led Northern Illinois to put the work in charge of a committee. From this committee developed other committees until finally the General Mission Board was appointed; it was succeeded in 1946 by the General Brotherhood Board, which now has charge of missions in home and foreign lands, and through a board of directors also holds the publishing interests in trust and is responsible for the management of the same. From such a small beginning have grown our foreign missions. Thirteen missionaries have been sent to Scandinavia.

In 1947 the work in Scandinavia was closed. This was due to the fact that the membership had moved to

many parts of Scandinavia leaving only a small group to carry on the work of the Church of the Brethren. The Board felt it wise to recommend that the members affiliate with other denominations and to use the money which was invested in property and personnel in other areas of the world where the need seemed to be much greater.

As in Denmark, so our missions in other fields were conceived under the leadership of individuals. We turn now to our missions in India, China, Nigeria, and Ecuador. As the story of these missions has been fully written up, only the briefest account is given here.

### INDIA

The mission in India was born from the enthusiasm of Wilbur B. Stover, who, after his conversion at Mount Morris College in 1885, became possessed with the conviction that he must carry the gospel to India through the Church of the Brethren. He talked this in season, out of season; anywhere, everywhere; to those who agreed with him and to those who differed with him. When some of the leading men told him that his idea was correct, but that the church was not yet ready for that undertaking, his reply was: "It is my business to help get the church ready for her great first-work." It was hard to meet such a statement and such enthusiasm.

#### *The Missionary Reading Circle*

Stover conceived the idea of getting folks interested through the reading of mission books. This led to the organization of the Missionary Reading Circle with Wil-



bur B. Stover, president, and Edith Newcomer of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, secretary. The *Helping Hand*, published by James M. Neff of Covington, Ohio, became the medium for promoting the Reading Circle. During its existence (1893-1906) some two thousand members were enrolled. Mission study classes in the colleges also developed missionary sentiment and led young people to look toward foreign mission service as a lifework.

### *Five Missionaries Approved*

Missionary sentiment grew. The Waynesboro congregation in Pennsylvania was ready to furnish \$850 to send Stover to India. Five candidates offered their services for the field: Albert W. and Alice Vaniman, Wilbur B. and Mary Emmert Stover, and Bertha Ryan. Conference of 1894 approved all, with the understanding that only three should be sent at the time. This raised a serious problem with the Mission Board. Before the close of Conference the Vanimans came to the rescue and graciously withdrew their names, suggesting that the Stovers be sent as they had been so active in promoting the mission cause for India. On October 16 the Stovers and Bertha Ryan sailed from New York for Bombay. They found a permanent location at Bulsar, where they studied the field and the language and made Wilbur's dream come true.

### *Problems and Progress*

They had expected to meet hard problems. In this they were not disappointed. All was very new and very

different from what even they had anticipated. But they labored on, convinced that they were in the Lord's work and that he who sent out the workers would also support them. There was great rejoicing when, on April 25, 1897, they gathered their first fruits and baptized eleven. They were getting started. Then came the awful famine which brought a new setting to the mission. The Conference of 1897 appointed four new missionaries for India: Samuel N. McCann, Elizabeth Gibbel (later McCann) and Daniel L. Forney and wife. Conference also authorized opening an orphanage for twenty-five children, but later increased the number to fifty. Such, however, were the needs that later the missionaries were authorized to use their discretion as to the size of the orphanage.

The new workers were sorely needed and together the seven missionaries added to their other missionary labors gathering the destitute children and caring for them as best they could. The church at home responded nobly. Funds flowed freely into the mission treasury. Adult Indians were set to useful work, such as building reservoirs to preserve water for dry seasons. The missionaries felt it was better to pay adults for their labor, so that they in turn could pay for their food, than to feed them outright. Thus our mission became a relief station early in its career. From this the Indian people discovered that the Christian way of life was a different and a better way of life. More than once has an India famine opened to the missionaries a larger field. When the plague came the missionaries taught the people how

to meet the situation, and, at the risk of their own lives, saved multitudes. Let no one think that in such service the missionaries turned aside from their mission labors. Did not Jesus heal the sick and feed the hungry? The heroism of missionaries in times of crises has matched heroism in any other field.

From the first efforts at Bulsar the mission spread to new territory and into new avenues, so that today the Church of the Brethren in India renders a vital ministry in the communities where it lives. The spiritual and physical conditions of tens of thousands have been improved over what they were in 1894 when our first missionaries came into their midst. The church has sent one hundred thirty-six missionaries to India; the banner year was 1919, when Conference approved twenty missionaries for India alone. The latest statistics credit India with ninety-five hundred members and twenty-five organized congregations.

#### CHINA

Published reports of the India mission created interest in other fields. Especially were college students studying missions abroad. China, with her teeming millions who did not know Christ, gripped the students and the church. The *Gospel Messenger* and the *Missionary Visitor* spread information. Those with means were ready to support the cause more liberally. Interest in China became dominant at McPherson College. The leading spirit there was Frank H. Crumpacker. He and his wife were enthusiastically supported by many others.

*First Missionaries*

The Conference of 1906 appointed Frank H. and Anna Crumpacker and Emma Horning as missionaries to China. However, it was thought best that the home church should be aroused and cultivated before opening the mission. Crumpacker was put into the field for this purpose. A year later it was decided to wait until two more missionaries could be secured, lest the party of three might be seriously handicapped. At the Conference of 1908 George W. and Blanche Cover Hilton were approved for China and in the fall the party of five sailed, arriving at Shanghai on September 25. In March they settled at Ping Ting Chou and continued their language study, at the same time getting acquainted with the people and rendering such service as their limited knowledge of the language made possible.

Then Hilton became sick and in the spring of 1910 he with his wife came to the States for a surgical operation and recuperation. Those remaining labored on, and on April 3 the first fruits in China, two young men, were baptized. That same year Minerva Metzger was sent to China. In 1911 Conference approved as new missionaries Benjamin F. and Minna Heckman, J. Homer and Minnie Bright, Anna Hutchison, and Winnie Cripe, who with the Hiltons found it necessary to remain in Tien Tsin because China was in the midst of a rebellion. The other missionaries were ordered to the coast. Brother Crumpacker, however, remained at his post most of the time. In the spring it was possible for some of the missionaries to return to Ping Ting Chou.

Problems and sorrows did not come singly. Brother Heckman contracted smallpox from his little daughter. Medical assistance was not close at hand and, strong though he was, he passed away on January 12, 1913. This proved a hard blow to the missionaries, but the news of his death increased interest on the part of the home church. The suffering following the war opened the way for relief work and an orphanage was opened. There were now two stations in China. The recent sickness and death stressed the need of a physician at each station. The men were available and the Conference approved Dr. O. G. Brubaker and wife, and Dr. Fred G. Wampler and wife. These four, accompanied by Anna V. Blough and Emma Horning, who had come home because of health conditions, sailed for China in 1913, greatly cheering the hearts of the missionaries and the Chinese people with whom they were to labor. The arrival of the doctors opened the way for a hospital in China earlier than was the case in India. Experiences in India proved valuable in future missions.

### *Famine and Relief*

Economic and agricultural conditions have made China subject to frequent famines. Here, as in India, famine led the missionaries into relief activities. The Church of the Brethren has always had an ear open to the appeal of hunger and a sympathetic heart that responded to hunger's cry. The missionaries have always recognized their obligation and opportunity in such a crisis. In China building roads again gave the mission-



aries their chance to demonstrate Christianity in action. Brethren activity in war-stricken areas is but another phase of what the church has always taught and practiced. Thrilling and enlightening are the stories of how the Brethren fed soldiers of both armies during the Civil War in China.

### *Then Came Japan*

All was going well in China until the Japanese invasion. The tragic disappearance of Alva C. and Mary Hykes Harsh and Minneva Neher on December 2, 1937, was a severe blow to the missionaries and the church in China, but all held on. Repeatedly the missionaries were advised to leave, but they stayed by their posts until it became apparent that remaining would probably be more harmful than helpful. In the winter of 1940 they were forced to bid good-by to their Chinese groups and go to the coast. In early 1941 they returned to the States, awaiting the time when they might again resume their work. The labor and heroic sacrifice of Howard Sollenberger during the war will ever be remembered as a great testimony of the fellowship of service and suffering which has consistently characterized the pages of Brethren history.

By 1946 conditions in China had improved sufficiently to encourage the home church to return fifteen missionaries to the field, a goodly number of them newly recruited for the work. Nine new recruits joined them the next year. After less than two years China found herself in the midst of revolution once more, and again



it was advisable for the missionaries to leave their posts. The last missionary, after considerable difficulty at the hands of the new government in China, returned to the United States in 1951. At that time it was estimated that the Church of the Brethren in the Shansi province numbered two thousand members. Reports since then indicate that the churches are holding regular services, receiving new members, and carrying on an active program of Christian endeavor.

### NIGERIA

The third foreign field for our church proved to be Nigeria, West Africa. The leaders in the Nigeria mission were Albert D. Helser and H. Stover Kulp. Helser was a student from Manchester College and Kulp was from Juniata College. The Conference of 1922 appointed Albert D. and Lola Helser and H. Stover and Ruth Royer Kulp as missionaries to open a new field in Africa. Because of the conditions confronting them in finding a location it was decided that the men should go, make the survey, and find a location, the women to follow later. They chose Garkida, in northern Nigeria, as their location, one thousand miles from the coast and three hundred fifty miles beyond railroad service. The following year their wives followed.

#### *Primitive Conditions*

Conditions were most primitive. There was no literature in the native tongue. Added to the difficulty of a new language, the missionaries of necessity had to make their own translations of such parts of the New

Testament as they thought best to introduce first. Then there was the problem of material and books for the schools which were to follow. This third mission field benefited from the experiences of the other two fields. Buildings erected were carefully planned to meet the needs of the African people—such as they could appreciate, and, as native congregations should be established, such as they could maintain. The missionaries had barely gotten well started in their labors when their little band was broken and Ruth Royer Kulp with her first-born consecrated Nigerian soil in answer to the messenger of death on July 15, 1924. Bowing to the inevitable, they toiled on and the Lord blessed their efforts.

### *Among the Lepers*

The prevalence of leprosy opened a new field for the new mission. In addition to the many other activities in which missionaries must of necessity engage if they would demonstrate the Jesus way of life, this mission began work with the lepers. Studies in medicine as related to lepers have brought much cheer and hope to the unfortunates who were long considered beyond the help of medical skill. Both the English government and the American Leprosy Mission recognized what the Brethren mission was attempting and both have been making substantial contributions for the leprosarium under Brethren management. Many lepers have been helped in this colony; many have been rendered whole in body and soul because the missionaries have not lost sight of their real purpose in going to Africa.

The church has sent one hundred seventeen missionaries to Nigeria, where there is now a church membership of just over two thousand souls. Climatic conditions require more frequent furloughs than in our other missions.

#### ECUADOR

The most recent overseas mission field for the Brethren has been Ecuador. In 1943 the Brethren Service Committee opened a boys' club in Quito, which they operated most successfully for four years. During that time the General Mission Board studied the possibility of an evangelical mission in Ecuador and voted to begin the work. In 1946 J. Benton and Ruby Frantz Rhoades went to Ecuador to begin language study. In the same year a careful survey was made before selecting a location in the Llano Grande Valley, about fifteen miles from Quito, the capital. A twenty-five-acre farm was purchased as the base from which the work could begin among six thousand neglected Indians.

During the first ten years of the work the Ecuadorian church experienced tremendous growth, numbering thirty-eight members in 1956. Although the number appears small, when we compare the growth with that of other Protestant missions to the Indians we realize that the efforts of our earliest missionaries have been effective.

Supporting the program of evangelism are a six-grade school, a clinic, and an agricultural program. The church has sent fourteen missionaries to Ecuador.

### A BROAD VIEW OF MISSIONS

When we first sent missionaries to the foreign field many in the home church considered preaching to be, if not the only work of the missionary, at least the one great work. There were others, however, who had the larger conception of missionary endeavor. Fortunately the missionaries themselves understood missions in the broader sense. The mission that would succeed must understand the national and his heritage, must study his needs, and must show wherein the Jesus way of life is the best way of life. The mission must recognize the good in national faith and custom, and, so far as possible, must build on what the people already have.

Broadly speaking, missions function through evangelization, education, and hospitalization; through the political, economic, social, and religious life of the people. Missions need the preacher, the teacher, the doctor, the nurse, the craftsman, the businessman, the farmer, and the mother with her children as a model home builder—all these, that every phase of life may be brought into contact with the missionary message. This broad field of service is one reason why missions cost what they do; it is also a reason why they accomplish what they do. Modern missions preach the gospel, conduct schools, build and maintain hospitals, teach men how to improve the soil and produce better crops and stock, and train women to care for their children and make their huts homes. Unless the missionary is an all-round being he finds himself handicapped in many a crisis.

As most of man's living comes directly or indirectly from the soil, Brethren missionaries with their rural background have been able to adapt themselves readily to conditions as they are found on the mission field. Further, their simple and frugal life is an asset as they move among a backward people. The nationals soon discover the difference between those who retain the old way and those who adopt the Christian way of life. Because the new way is the better way they are more easily won.

#### THE EMERGING EMPHASIS

Within the past ten years great stirrings in world missions have led our church to re-examine much of its thinking about overseas missions. Political revolutions in Asia and Africa which have thrown off the yoke of colonial nations—usually Christian in religion and white in skin color—have had great influence on that aspect of the church's life which we refer to as foreign missions.

The emphasis emerging is one of co-operation between the Brethren of North America and the Brethren of India, Nigeria, and Ecuador. This new spirit is giving the "younger churches" outside the United States a great opportunity to develop a church life which is compatible with their customs and cultures. Missions are fading into the background as vigorous and independent churches take their place to accept the full rights and obligations which belong to Christians everywhere. Partnership is the strong spirit which is bringing Brethren in all countries together for a united effort to

establish congregations of worshipers for whom Christ is Lord. In this togetherness Brethren in North America are finding fresh impetus for a vigorous expression of the evangelical quality which is so essential in the full expression of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### REACTION ON THE HOME CHURCH

The reaction of missions on the home church has been most salutary. Missions have developed the sympathetic heart and the liberal hand. They have opened the eyes of the church membership and have brought to the younger generation ample opportunity to satisfy the most ambitious and the most consecrated. They have taught youth the difference between the material and the spiritual and have led many youth to devote themselves fully and unreservedly to the Lord's work. Foreign missions may be called the seed and hope of the home church.



# 14

## *The Years Since 1941*

During the years since 1941 many changes have occurred in the organizational structure of the church, in its internal functioning, and in its outreach to a world badly in need of its ministry of love and reconciliation. Some of these changes have been noted in the preceding chapters. To others of these recent developments this chapter is devoted.

### THE GENERAL BROTHERHOOD BOARD

During the years immediately preceding 1941 a feeling had been developing rather widely that the existing organizational structure of the church was not conducive to the greatest possible efficiency. This feeling came to a head in 1943 with Annual Conference's assigning to a committee the responsibility for studying "the simplification and integration of the over-all organization of our church." Following this committee's tentative report, Conference in 1945 appointed a commission of fifteen members to make a thorough study of this subject. This commission's report, made to the 1946 Conference, was adopted. After some minor changes in succeeding years, the organizational pattern for the central governing body of the church evolved into that which is current in 1956.

The over-all interests of the church are centered in a single board of twenty-five members elected by Annual Conference and known as the General Brotherhood Board—Church of the Brethren. Each member of the board is elected for a term of five years and may succeed himself once. A member having served two consecutive terms may again be elected after one year has elapsed. The board annually selects one of its number to serve as its chairman and another to serve as its vice-chairman. It meets three times a year—at Elgin, Illinois, in the early winter and in the spring and at Annual Conference in June; in addition, its executive committee meets at least twice a year.

The General Brotherhood Board is divided into five commissions of five members each, their separate functions being readily recognized by their names: Christian Education Commission, Brethren Service Commission, Ministry and Home Mission Commission, Foreign Mission Commission, and Finance Commission, the members of the latter commission serving also as the board of directors of the Brethren Publishing House. The total board, under a different organization, acts as the Pension Board of the church.

The General Brotherhood Board chooses a chairman for each commission. Although the various commissions handle the detailed plans for and the carrying out of their work, the General Brotherhood Board as a unit evaluates the program, establishes the general policies, and weighs the budget needs of each, thus in reality being responsible for the total program of the church.

The General Brotherhood Board elects a general secretary, who becomes a member of the Brotherhood staff, with his office in Elgin, Illinois. Raymond R. Peters was the first general secretary, guiding the new organization through its earliest years. After six years of service in this capacity he was succeeded in 1952 by Norman J. Baugher.

Members of the Brotherhood staff at Elgin are selected by the General Brotherhood Board, their separate duties being assigned and supervised by the board. Most of the members of the staff are organizationally related to the various commissions or to the Brethren Publishing House board of directors. A few whose services are of a more general nature are not commission-related but are directly related to the board as a whole through the office of the general secretary; a still smaller number are directly related to the Pension Board.

#### BRETHREN SERVICE

The Brethren Service Committee was recognized as a major board of the church at the La Verne Conference in June 1941. This action combined two earlier committees and added the responsibility for Christian social action in general. In 1946 the responsibility for peace education was shifted from the Board of Christian Education to the Brethren Service Committee. In 1947, with the reorganization of the separate boards of the church into the General Brotherhood Board, the name of the committee was changed to the Brethren Service Commission.

Christian service was not new to the Brethren. Our missionaries had done relief work as necessary. In 1932, Annual Conference had authorized the Board of Christian Education to make arrangements for neutral war relief. Brethren had co-operated with Friends and Mennonites in administering relief on both sides during the Spanish Civil War. Personnel and money had been channeled to China for direct relief in co-operation with the General Mission Board. In 1939 the Council of Boards had directed the General Mission Board and the Board of Christian Education to serve together in the field of relief and reconstruction work. An executive committee of five—two from each board and one from without—had been created to carry on this work. Sometime prior to 1935 the Board of Christian Education, through a special committee, had been studying the problems resulting from military conscription and evolving plans for a church-approved alternative service for its young men facing the draft. It was this advisory committee for conscientious objectors and the earlier Brethren Service Committee which were combined to form the Brethren Service Committee in 1941.

*Civilian Public Service; Later Alternative Service*

From 1941 through 1945 the major work of Brethren Service was the initiation and administration of the civilian public service program. The story of this work has been fully told by Leslie Eisan in his book, *Pathways of Peace*, published by the Brethren Publishing House in 1948, and need not be sketched here.

The continuation of the military draft after the close of World War II made it necessary that some form of alternative service be provided for our conscientious objectors. Under the Selective Service Act of 1951 a liberal arrangement was worked out whereby the conscientious objector, with the approval of his local draft board, might work either for wages or on a voluntary basis in the States or abroad so long as the work being done was in the interest of public health, welfare, or education. Under this arrangement our young men have been employed in welfare institutions, overseas missions, educational institutions, and church headquarters offices. At this point volunteer service and alternative service have become nearly synonymous.

### *Overseas Relief and Rehabilitation*

The ending of World War II found the Brethren ready to launch a large-scale service of material aid and friendly ministry to the victims of war and its aftermath in Europe and elsewhere. Even during the war the Brethren had sent personnel and money to the War Prisoners' Aid of the Y.M.C.A. We also participated in various interdenominational relief programs, several of which by 1946 merged into Church World Service. From 1942 until their closing, Brethren Service sent personnel to assist in the welfare and pastoral ministries in the West Coast Japanese relocation centers and later established resettlement hostels in Chicago and Brooklyn.

Two other major projects were started during the war, both in 1942. One was a community rehabilitation



project at Castaner, Puerto Rico, consisting of a rural hospital and clinic and a community recreational center; later there were added a secondary-level academy, a church, a demonstration farm, and a crafts and small-industry program. The other was the heifer project. Since about 1952 this project has been interfaith in its supervision. A related program was that of the "sea-going cowboys," in which over five thousand men were recruited to accompany livestock being shipped abroad in co-operation with the United Nations Relief and Reconstruction Agency.

Also during the war, Brethren Service for a short time operated a small rural rehabilitation project in a mountain village in Mexico. From 1943 to 1947 it initiated and supervised a boys' club in Quito, Ecuador; in 1947 this was turned over to the government of Ecuador as the Church of the Brethren gave its attention to establishing a new mission in that country.

With the ending of hostilities, Brethren Service launched a rapidly expanding relief and rehabilitation program. It began in 1945 with the sending of relief workers and material aid to England, France, Holland, and Belgium. As the way opened in subsequent years, service teams were sent into Italy, Poland, Germany, Austria, Ethiopia, China, Greece, and Nigeria. Brethren Service sent no personnel, excepting on very brief assignments, to the Near, Middle, or Far East. However, large quantities of material aid were sent through co-operating relief agencies to Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Korea, and some money and materials were



given to the Brethren mission in India to be used in its famine relief program. In 1956 a young Brethren couple was sent to Japan to serve with Church World Service and to explore possibilities of a peace and goodwill program in that country. Since 1953 Brethren Service has participated in International Voluntary Services, which it helped found, by sending personnel to Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Nepal, Laos, and Viet Nam. It has also sent voluntary and alternative service personnel to serve with the Brethren missions in Nigeria, India, and Ecuador.

In its earliest stages Brethren Service in Europe consisted mainly of direct relief to the neediest people of those war-ravaged lands. Priority of attention was given to the refugees and other neglected persons, with help consisting mostly of food, clothing, and medicines. Gradually other services were added such as farm animals and seeds, tools and workshops, recreational centers, and helpers in orphanages and hospitals.

To back up our front services, supplies centers were established across the Brotherhood. The former Blue Ridge College properties at New Windsor, Maryland, were turned into a material aid processing center, and later into a general Brethren Service center to provide facilities for such programs as refugee resettlement, the heifer project, student exchange, and Brethren Volunteer Service training. Other major material aid centers were established at Nappanee, Indiana, and Modesto, California, with smaller temporary centers at Wenatchee, Washington, New Paris, Indiana, McPherson, Kansas, Roanoke, Virginia, and Dayton, Ohio. From

about 1947 on, Brethren Service trucks from these major centers have covered wide areas of the country on regular material aid pick-ups. By about 1952 our Brethren Service centers also became Church World Service centers, operated by the Brethren for Church World Service. The New Windsor center alone has processed around a million pounds of relief clothing each year for the last decade. In this same period approximately four hundred fifty Brethren Service workers have served overseas for two or more years, most of them on a maintenance-subsistence basis.

Brethren Service in Europe, with headquarters with the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, and with major service centers in Kassel, Germany, and Linz, Austria, has modified its program to meet current needs. It has always worked in close co-operation with the European churches, with other voluntary agencies, and with the governments of the countries in which it serves. New types of programs have gradually emerged. Some of these have been partially supported by our own government.

Since 1949, more than eight hundred German and other European high school students have come to America under the auspices of Brethren Service for one year's residence with American families and for study in the local high schools. Many American students have gone abroad to live for a year or more. Brethren Service has also sponsored college, professional, and agricultural exchanges. In 1956 the Brethren student exchange program was instrumental in establishing the Interna-

tional Exchange of Christian Youth, Inc., which is an interdenominational program.

Another major effort has been the Brethren refugee resettlement program, which has worked with local churches, Church World Service, the World Council of Churches, and governmental agencies to assist in the resettlement of more than twenty-two hundred families from Europe and Asia in new homes in America.

Still another type of program has been that of international work camps and peace institutes. Since 1948 about two hundred thirty Americans have joined with approximately fifteen hundred youth from other countries in these Brethren-sponsored work camps. Brethren-sponsored tours to Europe and the Holy Land were begun in 1949 and since that time about two hundred twenty different persons have participated in one or more tours.

### *Domestic Rehabilitation Projects*

Though less dramatic and involving considerably less personnel and finance, attention has been given by Brethren Service to depressed areas here at home. The largest such undertaking is that at Falfurrias, Texas, where in 1946 was initiated a community rehabilitation program among Latin-Americans. In co-operation with the District of Texas and Louisiana, this program consists today of a thriving bilingual church, a kindergarten for Latin-American children, a demonstration farm program, club activities for the youth, and a general social service program to the Latin community.

Less comprehensive but well-planned programs of community rehabilitation have been undertaken in Negro slum areas of Baltimore, Maryland, Salina, Kansas, and Modesto and Fresno, California, and in the migrant labor camps of Florida.

Brethren began sponsoring work camps in the United States in 1936 and since that time nearly sixty work camps have been held in many parts of the country.

Following up the beginnings in civilian public service, Brethren Service has continued to sponsor summer service projects in mental hospitals, industrial communities, and other social-welfare institutions.

### *Brethren Volunteer Service*

Brethren Volunteer Service as a distinct program began when the 1948 Colorado Springs Annual Conference approved a youth resolution to ask the church to initiate a "broad plan of volunteer service for Brethren youth," though the principle of volunteer service had been prominent in the church for many years. Brethren Service immediately set up a comprehensive program involving for each quarter of the year an intensive training program at New Windsor for an average of twenty-five young people who would give a minimum of a year's volunteer service in the States or at least two years overseas. Since the program started in 1948 a total of nine hundred forty Brethren and other youth have each given a year or more of service in many projects at home and abroad, including local churches, relief centers, migrant camps, hospitals, orphanages, reformatories, homes

for the aging, overseas missions, slum clearance projects, medical experiments, and refugee camps. It has thus provided the church with one of its most effective means of motivating and training its youth. Other denominations have developed programs patterned on Brethren Volunteer Service.

### *Peace and Other Social Issues*

Peace has always been the major concern of Brethren Service. All of its programs have attempted to contribute to this objective, either directly or indirectly. However, it has been easier to sponsor peace-making activities that contribute to brotherhood and better world understanding than it has been to build genuine direct peace education and action programs. One exception to this has been the vigorous Brethren activity to discourage Congress from enacting universal military conscription and service legislation, through widespread letter writing and visits to Capitol Hill. Nevertheless, Brethren Service has persistently developed resolutions and Annual Conference statements on peace, produced peace literature, conducted peace institutes and leadership workshops, for some years sponsored peace caravans, and participated in the Church Peace Mission and other peace programs. One of the largest programs of training for peace and responsible citizenship has been the yearly Washington and United Nations seminars for youth and adults, involving as high as two hundred eighty and fifty persons respectively.

Other social issues have engaged the attention of



Brethren Service to a lesser degree, but are becoming increasingly important. Prominent among these are race relations, economic problems, and citizenship and political action. Since the 1950 Annual Conference, Brethren Service has also carried responsibility for an advisory service to Brethren welfare institutions such as homes for the aging.

The years ahead will probably see Brethren Service increase greatly its programs of social education and action in comparison to its present wide-scale programs of relief and rehabilitation, though the latter will probably always remain substantial because of the kind of world in which we live.

#### THE MINISTERIAL AND MISSIONARY PENSION PLAN

The Brotherhood's pension plan for ministers and missionaries is possible only because of developments in the church. It would not have been possible in the time when ministers were elected, served without salary, and completed life mostly within the bounds of one congregation. If a minister was in need, the congregation in which he lived usually provided such help as was given. Often the ministerial call of the church was laid upon persons who were endowed with the ability to provide well their own financial security.

The change from an unpaid to a salaried ministry came slowly. The early salaried ministers confronted old age with no church-sponsored retirement provision.

As early as 1904 Annual Conference approved a Ministerial and Missionary Relief Fund from which



aid was available. Aged ministers often cringed from asking relief, preferring to suffer. The relief was later dignified as a grant from the Ministerial and Missionary Service Fund. Changing the name did not greatly change the Brotherhood's chagrin in not providing a businesslike retirement plan for the increasing number of ministers giving full time to the pastorate on inadequate salaries. Many plans, including a pension plan operated by a life insurance company, and a ministers' mutual aid organization, were considered.

In 1943 the Ministerial and Missionary Pension Plan was inaugurated under the control of Annual Conference. It provides for payment by the congregation and the minister, each depositing a stated percent of the salary to the account of the minister. At age sixty-five the minister is entitled to retire and receive a monthly pension for life. A supplemental benefit fund was raised to assure that any low-salaried minister would have a pension not falling below a certain minimum.

The Ministerial and Missionary Pension Plan is administered by twenty-five trustees who are the same persons as constitute the membership of the General Brotherhood Board. They, however, transact business as a separate body. The trustees make an annual report to Annual Conference.

#### OUR WIDER AFFILIATIONS

As the Church of the Brethren became increasingly sensitive to the great need of mankind throughout the world for a ministry motivated by the love of Christ and

carried on in His name, it became more and more apparent to her leadership and her membership that a policy of nonco-operation with other Christian groups was neither fruitful nor Christian. The first steps toward affiliation with the wider circles of Christian work had been taken before 1941 through our co-operation in such interdenominational interests as Christian education and foreign missions.

In 1941 the Annual Conference voted to affiliate the Church of the Brethren with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (the Federal Council has since then merged with a number of other interdenominational agencies to form the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America). Subsequent Annual Conferences reaffirmed this newly established relationship. Through our representatives to the National Council of Churches we are enabled to make our distinctive and traditional viewpoints heard. And, conversely, through countless ways this affiliation with other Christian groups in a common endeavor has been beneficial to our church.

Christian horizons, however, are not limited by national boundaries. Most of the world's population lives outside our national territory. To these far-scattered children of our Father we have a Christian responsibility, and this responsibility can best be discharged in co-operation with other Christian groups throughout the world. The growing awareness of this truth led the Annual Conference of 1941 to approve affiliation with the World Council of Churches, then in the process of

formation. The Annual Conference of 1948 named delegates to the Amsterdam constituting convention of the World Council. Within its separate and rightful scope this affiliation is bringing to our church the same values found in the affiliation with the National Council of Churches and is similarly receiving the approval of the church.

## *Our Heritage*

### RURAL BACKGROUND

Brethren youth have a rich heritage to which, unfortunately, they have been exposed too little. Few realize what a grand background is theirs. The Church of the Brethren has been rooted and grounded in the soil. Her youth are sons of the soil. This rural setting with its invigorating country air has tended toward a healthy bloodstream, a sound body, and a clean mind. Farm life has brought them into intimate touch with nature and her processes, and close to God. Of necessity country boys and girls must develop self-reliance, must do for themselves and make many things—all this, far beyond what is possible for the city youth. The demands of farm life allow little time for idleness. For the time being this may seem irksome, but later years will reveal its merits. “God made the country, man the city, and the devil the small town” is an exaggeration of a great truth. But the country tan, the calloused hand, the keen eye, the hard muscle, and the firm step are some of the blessings of farm life that by far exceed the benefits of the golf course, the stuffy gymnasium, the crowded recreation hall, the movie atmosphere, and the street education of town and city when it comes to building character.

## FAMILY LIFE

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him' " are the words of Holy Writ. And Jesus, speaking of the marriage relation, says, "And the two shall become one." The Brethren have taken these and other passages of Scripture as the basis for the Christian family, which is the foundation of the best in modern civilization. Having from the beginning accepted the Bible, especially the New Testament, as their rule for living, they were driven to the belief that marriage is a holy institution, that it is entered for life and not for a limited period, and that here, as elsewhere, God's plan is the right plan and cannot be improved upon. The results of their faith and practice regarding family life have given to their youth a priceless heritage.

Because of the hardness of men's hearts Moses allowed divorce, but Jesus taught clearly that divorce was not the ideal in marriage. Marriage is the interlocking of two hearts for life with one aim and one purpose for mutual helpfulness. According to the teaching of Jesus, only because of infidelity may the bond be broken. Children are the fruitage of marriage, the crowning glory of two lives blended into one. A rural environment is ideal for the development of ideal family life. The family is a co-operative institution. In its rural setting each lives for all and all for each. The Christian family is a co-operative institution in which each member is a stockholder, a partner. Its rural setting offers ample opportunity for the children to discover the source of food

and raiment, the use and abuse of money, and the fact that only what comes into the family treasury can go out of the family purse to procure the necessities and luxuries of life. Thus children discover the function of money and how to avoid excessive debt. They may chafe because the farm offers so little to spend, but the experience teaches them how to spend wisely. In the past, as a rule, the Brethren have had large families. The large family offers unusual opportunities for the development of character. There is no better place to be born than in the middle of a large family where one may benefit alike from association with those older and those younger in years. Because Brethren families have been so largely divorceless, Brethren youth have a rich heritage for their own future family life.

### THE DIGNITY OF TOIL

Brethren have not been afraid of toil. They have stressed the dignity of labor, the virtue of frugality, and the deadening results of luxury. By the sweat of the brow they have learned the value of money and have taught their children that there are one hundred cents in every dollar. They have discovered that they can more easily and more profitably increase their wealth by denying themselves the harmful things of life than by senseless spending and profitless hoarding. They have been neither hoarders nor spendthrifts, and their children have followed in their steps. As a result they have not been excessively poor and you will search long for millionaires in their ranks. They have discovered that



the great values are spiritual and outweigh all material values. That is one reason why they are liberal in worthy philanthropies and do not neglect the poor. On the other hand, they wisely insist that those who can should toil with their own hands and, so far as possible, support themselves without becoming a burden to others.

### FELLOWSHIP

The Church of the Brethren is a fellowship, a brotherhood. Her members love to live in groups, but usually avoid being excessively clannish. They are known for their sociability at their public services, and at their annual conference gatherings—community, district, regional, and national. These gatherings have kept them on a common level and have taught them how to develop and maintain a fellow feeling in a changing world. Possibly their rural life has helped to maintain that attitude, but deeper than all else has been the saying of Jesus, “. . . and you are all brethren.”

It was adherence to that principle of equality that long kept them from raised platforms in their meeting-houses. They wanted the ministers to be on a common level with the laity. It was that principle that led them to provide for their poor and to shrink from property and life insurance for a long time. This brotherhood idea has found expression in the relation between the Brethren family and the hired workers in it. These workers are considered a part of the family. Adherence to this principle of brotherhood has been manifest in the relations between employer and employee where

numbers larger than the family are involved. This fellowship idea has made them a part of that great group whom God seems especially to love because He has made so many of them—the common people. This high grade of fellowship has developed among them the simple life free from many of the frills and follies of the world, free from drink, tobacco, and other narcotics with their harmful effects, free from late hours with the attending evils, and free from life lived on the lower level.

The love feast has been a vital factor in developing and maintaining this fellowship feeling. Here again the Brethren have followed the New Testament teaching. Their love feast is a great pageant lifted out of the days of Jesus. In this pageant all are actors, not merely spectators. Following the pattern of that last feast of Jesus with His disciples, they gather in the evening, wash feet, eat together a simple meal, and partake of the bread and the cup. For each part they read the setting as given in the New Testament. Thus do they from time to time renew their fellowship and show forth His death until He comes again. In the apostolic church, master and slave together enacted this same pageant which stressed that all were brethren and that God was their common Father. Where these ordinances are observed in the Christ spirit, slavery will disappear and true brotherhood and fellowship will prevail.

#### PEACE

The early Christian church was opposed to war. Not until Constantine formally accepted Christianity

did it become popular for Christians to join the military forces. The Church of the Brethren was conceived and came into being in a warring Europe. Having adopted the New Testament for her creed, she found in it no basis for the waste and slaughter of war. She adopted the constructive power of love instead of the destructive power of hate as her way of life, and that left no place for war. For her, war is rooted in sin and, as she sees it, the Christian must find war incompatible with and contrary to the basic teachings of Jesus. Nor is she satisfied with merely opposing war and refusing to take part in it; she is now active in proclaiming goodwill and reason as the proper means of arriving at a settlement of differences, whether they are personal, national, or international.

In times of war she has succored the suffering and wounded. She has always believed what the Red Cross has taught the world and practices—relief for all, both friend and foe. Her contributions to relief have been substantial. During the First World War her membership of one hundred fifty thousand contributed nearly \$300,000 to Armenian relief. During the Spanish civil war she stood willing to supply funds, food, and clothing for the needy and furnish relief workers for both factions. In the wars that have been fought since then, her contributions and her workers went to help and to save life, not to destroy and kill. For the Brethren, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, loving enemies, and praying for those who abuse us are not euphemistic expressions but principles to live by and, if need be, to

die by. This was well illustrated by John Naas, the first outstanding Brethren conscientious objector in Europe, and by Christopher Sower, the younger, who for conscience' sake suffered loss of property and imprisonment during the Revolutionary War. Others have had similar experiences. Until recently, only rarely had a member of the Church of the Brethren become a soldier or learned the art of war.

The church has ever been grateful to the government for the recognition of the right of conscience, but if this right was not recognized she has been willing to suffer persecution and imprisonment rather than accept combatant service in the army. Her long record of opposition to war and her peaceful habits of living have been a strong testimony to her faith in the futility of war as a means of adjusting differences and attaining justice. The church has been influential in securing favorable laws for her members in time of war in the past. When the present peacetime draft laws were enacted the Friends, Mennonites, Brethren, and other conscientious objector groups in co-operation succeeded in securing the recognition of the right of conscience and substitute service in constructive fields under civilian control instead of active or noncombatant service under military control. Because war breeds war, develops the worst in man, forgets the sacredness of human life, denies the practicability of the teachings of Jesus, wastes the goods by which men live, condemns the innocent to starvation, disease, and death, and in the end settles nothing, the church with all its might opposes war and offers to her

youth and to the world the God-given way of the abundant life instead of the worldly way of war which at last must resort to the peace table for a new settlement of old scores.

### SELF-CONTROL

*Temperance* is a word full of meaning. Its etymology takes us back to *temper, time*. To temper is to time, to regulate. The temperate life is the regulated, the timed life. Because temperance is so commonly confined to the problem of intoxicating liquor, a better word for us is *self-control*. The Brethren have always stressed self-control. Their earliest Conference decisions as they related to the manufacture, sale, and use of strong drink were for total abstinence. From this course they have never deviated. The Church of the Brethren was a temperance organization long before temperance societies made their appearance. Because of this she did not at first see the necessity and opportunity of laboring for temperance beyond her borders. When, however, she threw herself into the thick of the temperance fight she appointed a national committee to further this cause and did her full share in securing local option and national prohibition. But she went far beyond the matter of drink.

Her battle for self-control is against tobacco in all its forms because it is a nasty and poisoning weed, in no way leading to a cleaner and better life, but rather in the opposite direction. The church is opposed to those customs and practices that lead away from the



simple, the better, the spiritual life. That is why she opposes extravagance in dress, in furnishings, and in all other areas of life. She belongs to what is called "the plain people." Self-control through the whole life is her teaching—in food and drink, in work and recreation, in expenditure and saving, in thought and speech. With Paul of old she believes that mastery is attained by practicing self-control in all things. By *all things* is meant good things. In that which is harmful total abstinence must be the rule and practice.

#### OUR CREED

*Creed* is rooted in *credo, I believe*. Creeds have been many and various. Churches with creeds have this advantage over those that have no written creed: they can readily point to a formal statement of their faith and practice. Churches that have no written creed cannot do this. Churches, whether with or without a written creed, do change their creedal statements from time to time. A church with a written creed usually has a rather hard time to make a change. Where there is no written creed changes are more frequent and more easily made.

The founders of the Church of the Brethren rejected much in the formal creeds of their day. They were discovering new truths and new interpretations for old truths. In their quest for the truth, they knew they had not found it all. They searched the New Testament until they became satisfied that it revealed Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Savior of the world. They



accepted Him as such and the New Testament as God's will made known to man. Though they had not found all the truth in the New Testament, they adopted it as their creed and its teachings as their way of life. Further, they were willing to accept any new light that should come to them in their future study. And more than that, they were willing that others should have this same privilege. Thus it has come to pass that the church has no written creed.

The church does, however, have certain beliefs, practices, and traditions that have been a vital part of her being. She has made great changes in some lines. It was easier for her to make these changes because she was bound by no written creed. Here is a point that will illustrate this principle. The church taught nonconformity to the world. In her attempt to give expression to this doctrine she long held to certain forms in dress and kept aloof from certain professions and occupations. In the course of years some felt that the desired ends were not reached by this method. Gradually changes crept in. The principle of nonconformity, or the simple life, was retained but the method was changed. Now the attempt is made to instill the right attitude on these questions and so to shape life as to avoid the evils in one's environment. This is in harmony with that great truth that the letter kills but the spirit gives life.

When Jesus was asked for the first and great commandment, He, in a few words, stated the first as love to God and the second as love to man, and said that on these two hang all the law and the prophets. These two

commands stress the upward reach to God and the outward reach to man. The biography of Jesus is the shortest biography I know: He "went about doing good." Blessed are those who follow in His steps. In adopting the New Testament as their creed the Brethren did wisely. Thus they made their creed timeless: the New Testament has stood nearly nineteen hundred years; it will stand to the end of time. It is simple; its statements cannot be improved. It is comprehensive; it takes in the whole Bible and all phases of life. It allows for growth in mankind; as new situations arise new adaptations can readily be made. It is God's own Word; there can be nothing better.

When the Brethren say that the New Testament is their creed they mean: "What it says we believe. When it commands we will obey."

### A WAY OF LIFE

The Church of the Brethren considers the Christian religion a faith, a profession—and more, a way of life. This way of life is a new way. Jesus came that men may have life, the abundant life, life beyond the common lot. Christians are those who accept that way and walk therein.

This Jesus way is full of new meaning and manifests itself in a way new to the world. This way means sympathy for the sorrowing and suffering, succor for the needy, food for the hungry, clothing for the naked, guidance for the unenlightened, love, forgiveness, intercession for enemies, and life through Jesus Christ for

those dead in sin. For self it means surrender and self-denial. This new way leaves the soul restless until it finds peace and fellowship with Jesus and His followers. It cannot be satisfied until it helps others share that same fellowship. This new way leads to regular Bible reading and prayer and a faithful observance of the ordinances of the church revealed in the New Testament as means of grace for living a godly life. Because professing Christians have failed to walk in that way of life the world is in this awful mess in which we are now wallowing.

This in a measure is the message of the Church of the Brethren to a needy world, this the heritage she hands to her young people, bidding them in full confidence to lay hold of it, to incorporate it in their lives, and in coming years to bring it nearer to complete conformity with the will of God.

# Appendix

## I. BRETHREN PUBLICATIONS

An attempt to list denominational publications with early editors and places of publication. After 1883 the place of publication is generally omitted. From 1883 to 1899 the place was Mount Morris, Illinois, and since 1899 it is Elgin, Illinois. It is hoped that readers will add other titles and suggest corrections which will be needed for a complete and accurate record.

- 1851 *Monthly Gospel Visitor*, Volume 1, Number 1, April. Henry Kurtz, Poland, Ohio. James Quinter, second editor. Merged with *Christian Family Companion* (weekly), January 1874.
- 1865 *Christian Family Companion* (first weekly). Sample copies, 1864. H. R. Holsinger, Tyrone, Pennsylvania. Volume 1, Number 1, January 3.
- 1870 *Pilgrim* (weekly). H. B., George, and J. B. Brumbaugh, James Creek, Pennsylvania. Volume 1, Number 1, January 1. Merged with *Primitive Christian*, 1877.
- Vindicator* (monthly). Samuel Kinsey, Dayton, Ohio. Became official Old Order organ, 1881. Censured by Annual Meeting, 1879. Still published.
- Pious Youth* (monthly). H. R. Holsinger, Tyrone, Pennsylvania. First attempt at literary publication. Published two years.
- 1871 *Brethren's Family Almanac* (annual). H. R. Holsinger, Tyrone, Pennsylvania. Became *Yearbook: Church of the Brethren* in 1918.
- 1873 *Children's Paper* (illustrated monthly). Henry J. Kurtz,

Poland, Ohio. Advertised in *Christian Family Companion* in late 1872, and all through 1873. Printed at Dayton, Ohio, as late as 1879.

- 1874 *Christian Family Companion and Gospel Visitor* (weekly). Two merged by James Quinter, Dale City (Meyersdale), Pennsylvania. Name changed to *Primitive Christian*, 1876.
- 1875 *Der Bruderbote* (German monthly). L. A. Plate, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Moved to Germantown, 1876; to Lanark, Illinois, August 1876; later published by John Snyder for thirteen years at Grundy Center, Iowa; then at McPherson, Kansas, for some time.
- 1876 *Primitive Christian*, new name for merged *Christian Family Companion and Gospel Visitor*.  
*Young Disciple*. Brumbaugh Brothers, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. Monthly at first, published in four parts. Later weekly. Became *Our Boys and Girls*, 1905.  
*Brethren's Messenger* (monthly). L. A. Plate and J. T. Myers, Germantown, Pennsylvania. Moved to Lanark, Illinois, 1876, and merged with *Brethren at Work*.  
*Brethren at Work* (weekly). J. H. Moore, M. M. Eshelman, and J. T. Myers, Lanark, Illinois. To Mount Morris, Illinois, 1881. It and *Primitive Christian* became *Gospel Messenger*, July 1883.
- 1877 *Primitive Christian and Pilgrim* combined. James Quinter and H. B. and J. B. Brumbaugh, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.
- 1878 *Brethren's Advocate* (weekly). D. H. Fahrney, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. Specimen copy, December 21. Irregular at first. Probably discontinued in second year.  
*Deacon* (monthly). Deacon P. H. Beaver, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Published two years. Censured by Annual Meeting, 1879, for radical views.  
*Children at Work* (weekly). J. H. Moore and M. M. Eshelman, Lanark, Illinois. Volume 1, Number 1, June 1878.

Combined with *Our Sunday School*. Name changed to *Our Children*, 1932.

- 1879 *Our Sunday School* (weekly). S. Z. Sharp, Ashland, Ohio. First issue, March 26. One page to lesson; one page adapting lesson for primaries. Our first lesson paper. It, *Young Disciple*, and *Children at Work* combined and edited by Sharp during latter half of 1880.

*Youth's Advance*. M. M. Eshelman. Combined with *Young Disciple*, 1882.

*Brethren's Quarterly*. First quarterly. S. Z. Sharp, Ashland, Ohio. Short career.

*Progressive Christian* (weekly). H. R. Holsinger and J. W. Beer, Berlin, Pennsylvania. Censured by Annual Meeting, 1879. Became official organ of Progressive Brethren. Combined with *Gospel Preacher*, 1882, and became *Brethren Evangelist*, still published.

*Gospel Preacher* (weekly). Ashland, Ohio. S. H. Bashor and S. Z. Sharp. (See *Progressive Christian*.)

*Home Mirror* (monthly). J. S. Flory, Longmont, Colorado. Published several years. Was in print, 1879.

- 1882 *Family Companion* (monthly). J. H. Moore. Published for short period.

- 1883 *Gospel Messenger* (weekly). In July *Brethren at Work* and *Primitive Christian* became *Gospel Messenger*. Western house and plant, Mount Morris, Illinois. Eastern office, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. James Quinter, editor-in-chief; J. H. Moore, office editor—followed by D. L. Miller, 1884; H. B. Brumbaugh, eastern editor. Joseph Amick, manager. Publishing interests became property of the church, 1897. Plant moved to Elgin, 1899; now known as Brethren Publishing House, and puts out all church periodicals, etc.

- 1885 *Golden Dawn* (monthly). H. B. and J. B. Brumbaugh, May 1885 to August 1887.

- 1886 *Brethren's Quarterly*. Issued regularly from this date. "Ad-



- vanced" added, 1897. Early lesson writers: S. Z. Sharp, Leonard Huber, James M. Neff, Lewis W. Teeter, followed by I. B. Trout, J. E. Miller, E. G. Hoff.
- 1891 *Brethren's Juvenile Quarterly*. J. H. Moore, first editor. Volume 1, Number 1. Third quarter. Lessons long written by Elizabeth D. Rosenberger. Discontinued at close of 1915.
- 1893 *Brethren's Missionary Visitor* (monthly). Galen B. Royer, editor. Discontinued 1897 and material printed in *Gospel Messenger*. Revived 1902. Combined with *Gospel Messenger*, January 1931.
- 1895 *Children at Work* revived. Name changed to *Our Children* in 1932 and to *Tell Me* in 1949.
- 1897 *Brethren's Quarterly* became *Brethren Advanced Quarterly*. Lewis W. Teeter, editor. Became the *Brethren Adult Quarterly* in 1946.
- 1899 *Brethren's Illustrated Teachers' Quarterly*. Volume 1, Number 1, first quarter. Discontinued after 1906.  
*Landmark*. Howard Miller, John E. Mohler. January to October 4, 1899. Being critical of general church policy, it was of short duration.  
*Pilot* (weekly). Grant Mahan, editor. Volume 1, Number 1, January 7. Became *Inglenook*, April 7, 1900.
- 1900 *Inglenook* (weekly). New name for *Pilot*. Howard Miller, editor. First issue April 7. Discontinued April 29, 1913. Last editor, S. C. Miller.
- 1902 *Missionary Visitor* revived.
- 1905 *Our Boys and Girls* took place of *Young Disciple*, continuing old series of numbering. Name changed to *Journeys* in 1949.
- 1906 *Our Young People* (weekly). First editor, I. B. Trout. Name changed to *Horizons* in 1949.

- 1907 *Brethren Teachers' Monthly*. First issue January. I. B. Trout, first editor. Renamed *Bible Study Monthly* in 1942.
- 1916 *Brethren Primary Quarterly*. Maud Newcomer first lesson writer.  
*Brethren Junior Quarterly*. Elizabeth D. Rosenberger first lesson writer.
- 1917 *Brethren Home Department Quarterly*. Absorbed into the *Bible Study Monthly* in 1942.
- 1918 *Brethren Intermediate Quarterly*. Lessons written by Sunday-school editor, followed by others. Became *Intermediate and Senior Quarterly*, 1927, and *Brethren Youth Quarterly* in 1946.
- 1922 *Bible Monitor* (monthly). B. E. Kesler, Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Organ of Dunker Brethren.
- 1939 *Schwarzenau* (quarterly). Historical magazine, edited by Floyd E. Mallott. Volume 1, Number 1, July. Discontinued in 1942.
- 1942 *Bible Study Monthly* absorbed *Brethren Teachers' Monthly* and *Brethren Home Department Quarterly*.
- 1955 *Brethren Life and Thought*, a quarterly devoted to the scholarly interests of the church, published by the Brethren Journal Association. Volume 1, Number 1, Autumn. Edward K. Ziegler, first editor.

## II. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ORGANIZED BY THE BRETHREN

The following is taken, with slight changes, from *Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren*.

- 1852 Jacob Miller's Select School, Buffalo Mills, Pennsylvania; discontinued, 1853.
- 1859 Cedar Grove Seminary, Broadway, Virginia.
- 1861 Kishacoquillas Seminary, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania; discontinued, 1867.

- 1861 New Vienna Academy, New Vienna, Ohio; discontinued, 1864.
- 1870 Salem College, Bourbon, Indiana; discontinued, 1874.
- 1871 Pleasant Hill College, Warsaw, Indiana; discontinued, 1872.
- 1872 Brethren High School, Berlin, Pennsylvania; discontinued, 1874.
- 1872 Burnetts Creek Normal School, Burnettsville, Indiana; discontinued, 1875.
- 1874 Plum Creek Normal School, Elderton, Pennsylvania; discontinued, 1878.
- 1876 Huntingdon Normal School and Collegiate Institute, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania; now Juniata College; senior college.
- 1879 Ashland College, Ashland, Ohio. Belongs to the Progressive Brethren since 1882.
- 1879 Mount Morris Seminary and Collegiate Institute, Mount Morris, Illinois; became Mount Morris College; discontinued, 1932.
- 1880 Spring Creek Normal and Collegiate Institute, Spring Creek, Virginia; now Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, Virginia; senior college.
- 1882 Linden Seminary, Hagerstown, Maryland; discontinued after few years.
- 1882 Mountain Normal School, Hylton, Virginia; discontinued, 1886.
- 1888 McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas; senior college.
- 1890 Botetourt Normal School, Daleville, Virginia; Daleville Academy, of Bridgewater-Daleville System of Schools; discontinued.
- 1891 Lordsburg College, La Verne, California; now La Verne College.

- 1895 Manchester College and Bible School, North Manchester, Indiana; now Manchester College; senior college.
- 1896 Fruitdale Academy, Fruitdale, Alabama; discontinued, 1901.
- 1897 Citronelle College, Citronelle, Alabama; discontinued after few years.
- 1897 Plattsburg College, Plattsburg, Missouri; discontinued, 1900.
- 1899 Maryland Collegiate Institute, Union Bridge, Maryland; moved to New Windsor as Blue Ridge College, senior college; as junior college affiliated with Bridgewater-Daleville. Purchased by non-Brethren. Campus now owned and used by Brethren Service Commission.
- 1899 Smithfield Collegiate Institute, Smithfield, Ohio; discontinued, 1902.
- 1899 Prince William Normal School, Brentsville, Virginia; discontinued after a few years.
- 1900 Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania; senior college.
- 1904 Canton College and Bible School, Canton, Ohio; discontinued, 1907.
- 1905 Bethany Bible School, Chicago, Illinois; now Bethany Biblical Seminary.
- 1905 Berean Bible School, Los Angeles, California; discontinued after a few years.
- 1909 Hebron Seminary, Nokesville, Virginia; discontinued, 1924.
- 1922 Church of the Brethren Industrial School, Geer, Virginia, Greene County Industrial School. Discontinued, 1936.
- 1923 Brethren Industrial School for Mexicans, Falfurrias, Texas; of short duration.

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# *Guide to a Study of the Book by Chapters*

## CHAPTER ONE

1. Name the three chief denominations of the eighteenth century.
2. What was the relation between church and state?
3. Why did Wittgenstein become an asylum for seekers of religious freedom?
4. Who was Prince Henry?
5. Picture a group of Bible students searching the Scriptures at Schwarzenau.
6. How did they come to stress certain neglected New Testament teachings? Name some of these teachings.
7. How did Alexander Mack become their leader?
8. In what points did Mack and Hochmann agree? Disagree?
9. Tell the story of the first baptism.
10. To what extent did the new church prosper?
11. Why was the new church persecuted?
12. What was the Häcker trouble?
13. Read repeatedly D. L. Miller's account of Schwarzenau.

## CHAPTER TWO

1. Why did the Brethren come to America?
2. Who led the first group to America? What special fitness did he have for the task?
3. What can you say of their voyage?
4. Why did they settle at Germantown?
5. Tell the story of the first mission tour.
6. Tell the story of the second mission tour.
7. What makes Christmas of 1723 memorable in Brethren annals?

8. How do you account for the presence of at least seven ministers among the thirteen men present at the first love feast?
9. Tell the story of the third mission tour.
10. What do you know about Martin Urner?
11. When were the Coventry and Conestoga congregations organized?
12. Describe the baptism of Conrad Beissel.
13. Write your own conception of Peter Becker.

### CHAPTER THREE

1. What change did the death of Prince Henry bring to the church?
2. Tell of the philanthropy of Alexander Mack and Adrian Pfau.
3. When and why did Mack come to America?
4. How was his group received?
5. What do you know about Beissel and the Ephrata movement?
6. Who was John Naas, our first conscientious objector?
7. Give an account of his labors in Europe and in America.
8. Where did Mack die and where are his remains buried?
9. Pen your own conception of Mack and his work.

### CHAPTER FOUR

1. Why may we consider the Sunday afternoon meeting of young married people at Germantown our first Sunday school?
2. What might have resulted if the Brethren had developed those meetings?
3. By how many years do these meetings precede the Robert Raikes Sunday school?
4. What do you know about Sower's Bible-verse cards of that period?
5. How did the Germantown church provide for the poor?
6. Tell the story of the Pettikoffer house.

7. What part did the Brethren take in the Germantown Academy?
8. Describe the work of the Sower press and evaluate its influence.
9. What were some moral issues on which the Brethren took advanced ground?
10. How did this help or hinder their numerical growth?
11. How did their German language retard their leadership?

#### CHAPTER FIVE

1. Why did the Brethren move southward rather than westward?
2. Name the three prominent elders who led southward.
3. For what was each of these three especially known?
4. What of the early church in Baltimore? How many congregations do we now have in Baltimore?
5. What was the attitude of the English in Virginia toward religious dissenters?
6. What was the Statute of Religious Freedom? Who was the author of it?
7. Tell of the work of John H. Garber.
8. Describe the labors of Jacob Miller and William Smith.
9. Name other prominent Brethren families in Virginia.
10. What questions were considered by the Annual Meeting of 1794?
11. What did Annual Meeting of 1797 say about slavery?
12. What states are included in the Southeastern Region?
13. Tell something about Brethren beginnings in each of these states.
14. Name the Brethren schools in the Southeastern Region and evaluate their services.

#### CHAPTER SIX

1. Note the early congregations in Pennsylvania.
2. Study Brethren family names on page 77.



3. Conestoga is a fine example of how one church extended its borders. Study the diagram on page 78.
4. What did Deacon John Keagy do?
5. How did George Price turn a dance into a gospel meeting?
6. Study the spread of the Kishacoquillas and Early Yellow Creek congregations as illustrations of home mission work.
7. Where did the Progressive movement start?
8. How do you account for the rather conservative attitude of some Pennsylvania congregations in contrast to the liberal attitude of others?
9. Name our educational institutions in Pennsylvania and evaluate their influence.
10. Name some factors that have made Pennsylvania a Brethren stronghold.

#### CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Name the first Brethren minister in Ohio and tell about his labors.
2. What do you know about the Stone Lick congregation?
3. Tell of the work of Jacob Miller. Where else have you met him?
4. Note the early churches as recorded on pages 85 and 86.
5. What can you say concerning John Gans?
6. Tell the story of Samuel Wier and his colored congregation.
7. When and where was the first church in Indiana organized? The second church?
8. Name the leaders in organizing these two congregations.
9. What has been the influence of Manchester College in its territory?
10. What can you say about George Wolfe and the Far Western Brethren?
11. Tell of the early Brethren in Northern Illinois and Wisconsin.
12. In what way has the church in Illinois been influenced by having Mount Morris College, Bethany Biblical Seminary, the

Brethren Publishing House, and the General Boards (now the General Brotherhood Board) offices in its midst?

#### CHAPTER EIGHT

1. What is said of Daniel Clingensmith?
2. Give an account of the Cape Girardeau County settlement.
3. What can you tell about William Gish and the Cedar congregation?
4. How many state districts are there in Missouri and what is their total membership?
5. Note the time when the first church was organized in each state west of the Mississippi River as stated on page 95.
6. What is said about Iowa and Minnesota?
7. State briefly the Brethren beginnings in Kansas, number of districts, and total membership.
8. When and how did the Brethren begin work in Oregon?
9. With the *Yearbook* and a map, study what is said in our text on pages 99 and 100 about California.
10. Mention some leaders in establishing the church in Nebraska.
11. Note that our summer camps had their beginning in the assembly at Beatrice, Nebraska, in 1916.
12. Why associate David Brower with Washington and Idaho?
13. What do you know about the Brethren in Colorado?
14. When and where did the Brethren do their first work in Texas and Louisiana?
15. What representation do the Brethren have in Oklahoma?
16. Consider the part emigration agents and railroads had in taking the Brethren to North Dakota and Canada.

#### CHAPTER NINE

1. What is the Annual Meeting of the Church of the Brethren?
2. By what names has it been known?
3. Tell the story of its beginning.
4. What was Count Zinzendorf's purpose in calling together a synod of the German churches?

5. Why did the Brethren withdraw from the Zinzendorf synod?
6. Where and when was our first Annual Meeting held?
7. When and where was the first Annual Meeting held that recorded its minutes?
8. What were some of the early problems considered?
9. Name the two groups of delegates to Annual Meeting.
10. What is the basis of representation for the local congregation? For the state district?
11. How does business find its way to Annual Meeting?
12. Name and state the territorial limits of the five regions.
13. Name the officers of Annual Meeting.
14. What are the functions of Standing Committee?
15. Distinguish between the business session and the other sessions of Annual Meeting.

#### CHAPTER TEN

1. What is the district meeting in the Church of the Brethren?
2. How did it originate?
3. As you have seen the district meeting in session what would you consider its chief function?
4. How is your district meeting conducted?
5. Name the officers of district meeting.
6. What is the relation of district meeting to the local church? To the Annual Meeting?
7. How are delegates to district meeting chosen?
8. Who may serve as a delegate?
9. How many delegates to district meeting may a local congregation have?

#### CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. What do you know about the Sower press and its publications?
2. Narrate the printing experience of Christopher Sower, Jr.
3. Tell the story of Henry Kurtz and the *Gospel Visitor*.
4. What was the first Brethren weekly paper? By whom and where was it established?

5. How did James Quinter come to enter the editorial profession? What papers did he edit?
6. Tell the story of the *Pilgrim* and the Brumbaugh brothers.
7. Tell the story of the *Brethren at Work*.
8. Do you read the *Gospel Messenger*? Tell what the last issue contained. Name its present editor.
9. What do you know about the Brethren Publishing House?
10. Name our Sunday-school papers. Who edits them?
11. How well are you acquainted with our Sunday-school lesson helps?
12. Study the Brethren publications listed on pages 185 to 189.

#### CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Turn to the latest *Yearbook: Church of the Brethren* and study the Christian Education Commission.
2. Scan the list of schools and colleges organized by the Brethren as listed on pages 189 to 191.
3. What does our book say about the nine attempts to establish schools from 1852 to 1874?
4. Study the founding of schools as given on page 133. Name the founders of each.
5. Name our present Brethren schools and tell when each was founded.
6. What place has been given to the Bible in our schools?
7. Have our schools helped or hindered the church? In what ways?
8. Should the church have schools of its own? Why your answer?

#### CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. What shows the missionary spirit of our early church in Europe? In America?
2. Tell the story of Christian Hope in his search for a New Testament church.
3. What can you say of the Cherry Grove district meeting of November 12, 1875?

4. Why did Northern Illinois act before consulting Annual Meeting?
5. What was the general attitude of the Brotherhood toward missions at that time?
6. How did the mission in Denmark open the way for foreign missions later?
7. What was the Missionary Reading Circle?
8. Who were our first missionaries to India? When did they go to their field?
9. Who were our first missionaries to China? When did they go to China?
10. Who were our first missionaries to Nigeria? When did they go to their field?
11. Who were our first missionaries to Ecuador? When did they begin their work?
12. Study the list of missionaries in the foreign fields as given in the latest *Yearbook: Church of the Brethren*.
13. State the nature of the work carried on in the several foreign fields.

#### CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. What was the form of denominational organization prior to 1946?
2. What disadvantages did this type of organization have?
3. Outline the organizational structure of the General Brotherhood Board.
4. In what way is this form of organization more efficient than the one which it replaced?
5. Name the responsibilities of the various commissions.
6. What are the main activities of the Brethren Service Commission?
7. How are these activities different from those carried on before the Brethren Service program was begun?
8. Tell about any Brethren Service projects you have participated in or observed.

9. How many persons in your congregation have engaged in alternate service or volunteer service?
10. Explain how the Ministerial and Missionary Pension Plan works.
11. Name the advantages to our church in being a member of the National Council of Churches.
12. What are the advantages in our being affiliated with the World Council of Churches?
13. Name the values we can share with other Christian groups through these two affiliations.
14. Can you think of other services now being rendered by the General Brotherhood Board which have not been mentioned in this chapter?

#### CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. What can you say of our rural background?
2. What is the Brethren view of marriage and family life?
3. How has our view of the dignity of toil enriched life?
4. Discuss Brethren fellowship.
5. State the historic position of the Brethren concerning war.
6. How has the church shared with others during war periods?
7. What has Annual Meeting said about the use of liquor? Of tobacco?
8. Discuss self-control.
9. What is the Brethren's creed?
10. How have the Brethren tried to maintain the simple life?
11. State briefly your own conception of your Brethren heritage.



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